our networks; none of these forms of deliberation are included in Mutz's study. Nor, finally, do deliberative theorists necessarily have as narrow a view of what counts as citizen participation as Mutz. Talking itself might be viewed as a form of participation in a deliberative democracy and Mutz seems to limit her analysis to more conventional forms of partisan activism.

Citizen Speak also postures as a refinement to deliberative democratic theory. Perrin's claim to challenge deliberative democracy is even more tenuous because, as he acknowledges, deliberative democratic theory is mostly a normative enterprise. His effort to show that our everyday political conversations do not conform to the strictures of most accounts of proper deliberation should hardly be especially surprising or interesting to deliberative democrats. Nevertheless, Perrin's book explores important empirical perspectives on how citizens talk to one another.

In his case, Perrin's evidence (for the most part) comes from careful observation of small focus groups he recruited and moderated in Alameda County, California. He is interested in in-group discussion because he views all thinking and talking as "citizenship activities"—and because he sees groups (even if homogenous) as the fundamental unit of citizenship. His capacious idea of political action and participation is refreshing if overly generous; his account of participation stands in stark contrast with the way Mutz operationalizes the idea in her study. His appreciation is that much of our sense of ourselves as citizens does not emerge from explicitly political discussion; instead discussion more generally is a critical corrective to the sort of work Mutz has undertaken. Mutz's analysis focuses on political discussants in particular.

Perrin conducted focus groups in five different types of civic associations: churches—both Protestant and Catholic—labor unions, business organizations, and sporting groups. He furnished volunteers within these groups with four political scenarios, watching and moderating their reactions. Specifically, he asked citizens what they would do if their senator was involved in a bribery scandal, if their local police force were engaged in racial profiling, if a local chemical plant was violating pollution laws, and if their local airport was threatening to expand.

Throughout the book, Perrin purports to discover how the "democratic imagination" works: How do citizens talk among themselves and how do they evaluate the avenues of political recourse available to them? His focus on what contributes to a citizen's ability to develop "creative" solutions is particularly interesting, though admittedly remains a bit vague throughout. His assessment that our imaginations are bounded by "political microcultures" seems plausible, though hardly as exciting as his effort to specify the conditions for true imaginative political problem solving.

Although the set of questions Perrin poses is certainly worthwhile, the book takes many theoretical diversions that obscure a clean argumentative structure. More, he devotes substantial real estate to categorizing different rhetorical styles, moves, logics, and methods and to giving us snippets of transcript here and there to give us a sense of how people talk in their "organic" environments. Discussants, it turns out, use narrative, trail off on tangents, use emotional appeals, and are skeptical of facts. They invoke moral arguments with great regularity—more than others have thought. They draw upon their own self-interest as well as the enlarged interests of the community. Perhaps most saliently, they spend a great deal of energy considering the capacity they have to accomplish anything about their problems. They consider political protest, signature gathering, media blitzes, governmental action, boycotts, writing letters to the editor, and revolution.

Ultimately, these building blocks may someday unlock the key to citizen creativity, however defined. However, the book does not deliver a persuasive account of the very creativity and imagination that Perrin purports to explore; he gives us only its loose structure. In the final analysis, there is something depressing about his findings: Most of the dialogue and discussion that Perrin reports can be seen as failures of imagination because people are unwilling to do much of anything in response to their political stimuli.

Given that all of Perrin's reported conversations transpire within civic organizations known to mobilize their participants well, perhaps homogeneity contributes to these participants' failure to imagine new methods to address their political problems. However, this would be the very opposite of what Mutz's study would suggest: homogenous groups should do better in producing active partisans. Perhaps crosscutting discussion promotes more creativity. Perrin might try more heterogeneous focus groups next to see if they are more imaginative in tackling political dilemmas.

Mutz and Perrin have written books investigating the nature of political discourse as it occurs in everyday environments. Although these books do not substantially challenge deliberative theory, they do contribute to an ongoing inquiry that should command widespread attention among political scientists and sociologists interested in how we can develop a tolerant, knowledgeable, and creative political culture to nurture our democracy.

Free Speech and Democracy in Ancient Athens.
By Arlene W. Saxonhouse. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 246p. $70.00.
DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707070247

— Geoffrey M. Vaughan, *University of Maryland, Baltimore County*

The subject of this book is *parrhêsia,* free or, as the author sometimes prefers, frank speech. Through close readings of stories by Plato and Homer, she identifies free speech with shamelessness and self-exposure, claiming that "[s]hame and free speech represent opposing points in the political order that play off one another in the construction of a stable

democratic polity" (p. 8). However, the ambitions of this book go well beyond the historical account of what happened in Athens. Rather, the author argues "there is a congruence between the Athenian version of freedom of speech, of philosophy, and democracy, all exhibiting a common hostility to hierarchy and to history or the past" (p. 36).

The analysis of free speech in the first chapter contrasts our contemporary understanding of free speech as a right, or a means of thwarting the power of the government, with the Athenian version, which "is the affirmation of the equality of participation and self-rule" (p. 24). The author then is able to connect this, the Athenian conception of democracy, to Socratic philosophy, thereby providing the central comparison on which the book turns: "To rule themselves, the people must liberate themselves from what has been, just as the interlocutors in the Platonic dialogues must shed the chains of past opinions to engage in the pursuit of what is true" (p. 40). For the rest of the book, democracy and philosophy are portrayed as disciplines that allow individuals to engage in the common enterprise of releasing themselves from the past through a shameless exposure of their opinions, in pursuit of the city's good or in pursuit of the truth (p. 159).

Although she does not make this same comparison, think of the boldness of the Athenians in the Melian dialogue of Thucydides and Thrasymachus's speech, which she does examine, in the *Republic.* Both are shocking in their frankness, in their *parrhêsia.* Yet both fail. The Athenians so horrify the Melians with their frankness that a peaceful surrender is not achieved, and Thrasymachus is silenced by Socrates for the remainder of a very long dialogue when the philosopher makes him blush.

Shame, it turns out, cannot so easily be overcome by free speech. The love of the old ways and the hiding of certain acts serve to bind people together in a political community. The central question of the book then becomes: "[I]s democracy grounded on the communitarian individual who experiences shame in a historical context or on the liberal individual who is free from both history and shame?" (p. 77). The lesson the author draws from Thucydides's account of Athenian democracy seems to be that democracy is grounded in neither but exists in a precarious balance between the two. On the one hand, democracy demands that citizens expose themselves to others through their shameless *parrhêsia,* looking forward and never backward, never being held to tradition or custom. On the other, the most successful democratic leaders often speak no more frankly than the ironic Socrates, appealing to shared beliefs such as the praise for *parrhêsia* rather than practicing it (p. 157). In a central example, Diodotus shames the Athenians into changing their mind in regards to the Mytileneans (p. 160).

Free speech in the assembly is also supposed to be true speech, not deceptive speech. The ideal of *parrhêsia* demands that the speaker reveal his—or her (p. 134f)—most deeply held, authentic views on the subject, which gives it an ambiguous role in a representative system (p. 24). Rhetoric is a perversion of *parrhêsia* because it is intentionally deceptive (p. 92), even when such deception is necessary for the good of the city, as Nicias failed to understand (p. 171). Thus, despite the many ways in which democracy does not and may not ever succeed in living up to the goal it shares with philosophy (pp. 171–73), the two share more than might at first appear to be the case.

There is a great deal more to this book than I have been able to mention, especially as regards the role of *parrhêsia* in philosophy. Nevertheless, the true accomplishment of this book is to reveal the connection between democracy and philosophy through their common dependence on *parrhêsia.* Each relies on frankness in speech and a willingness on the part of the speaker to expose his or her self to the criticism and, at its best, the instruction of others. However, democratic polities must rely on more than *parrhêsia* to preserve themselves: They also rely on its opposite, on shame. Because "*parrhêsia* cultivate[s] its own abuses" (p. 209), we learn that the philosophic pretenses of democracy will and can never be met.

The question that this book—like all the best books on democracy—leads us to ask is whether democracy can achieve even its political ambitions through its own practices. The author only motions toward an answer. At a time when philosophical liberalism and deliberative democracy compete for supremacy in the academy, the great regret in reading this book is that, out of philosophic irony or concern for the city, she is not more frank about providing an answer.

Challenging Liberalism: Feminism as Political Critique. By Lisa H. Schwartzman. University Park: Penn State University Press, 2006. 224p. $45.00.

— Emily R. Gill, *Bradley University*

In this book, Schwartzman argues that liberalism's methodological individualism and its neutrality through abstraction from social contexts and relations of power render it a questionable approach for those who would challenge the oppression of women or, by extension, of other traditionally subordinated groups. She instead advocates a feminist methodology based on ways that individuals are often embedded in a social context characterized by power and domination. She would not have us jettison concepts such as rights, equality, liberty, and autonomy, but would have us reformulate them by attending to perspectives and contexts that help us to avoid the pitfalls of liberalism.

To this end, Schwartzman in seven chapters brings to bear her approach on the work of theorists whose ideas contribute to the rejection of domination but are also in the end found wanting. Among liberal theorists, Ronald Dworkin's emphasis on equality of concern and respect