

Bernstein, in contrast, reads Arendt as fulfilling Adorno's modernist program. Arendt's political doctrine, he argues, is fulfilled in civil disobedience understood as an act of (re)founding and renewal. Acts of civil disobedience proceed in a way analogous to Adorno's "negative dialectics": They show that "there is a claim by a range of particulars that existing social practices deny" (p. 59). They also show that the truth of founding is refounding. This means that foundations—and principles—in human affairs are always subject to interrogation. They rest on promises, notably, on a mutual "holding" of certain truths to be "self-evident" (p. 68). Like artworks, founding principles hold "exemplary validity": They are particular beginnings that become authoritative universals. Thus, they also inspire and set standards for further creations or refoundings. Civil disobedience (if I understand Bernstein correctly) is precisely that—a refounding that keeps alive the promise of freedom through the "determinate negation of unfreedom" (p. 76).

Questions of subjectivity and sociality are a second problem area in which Arendt and Adorno sought to think the particular in critical relation to the universal. Dieter Thomä notes the strange absence in Arendt of a clear conception of human agency. That freedom seems to come "out of the blue"—or out of a fuzzy "natality"—suggests that Arendt remained beholden to the Kantian dualism between spontaneity and determinism (pp. 112 f.). Beyond this common critique, however, Thomä shows that her abstraction from sources of natural determinism in *The Human Condition* (1998) was not her last word. As her *Denktagebuch* (2002) shows, Arendt's list of "fundamental activities" included action, work, labor, and *love*. Though passions ultimately drop out of *The Human Condition*, they reemerge in *The Life of the Mind* (1981) in ways that compete with Adorno's views on subjectivity and sociality. Reading Arendt in light of Adorno allows Thomä to provide a more accurate phenomenology of natality as a form of remembrance and self-interpretation that ensures freedom by defying causality.

Chapters by Lars Rensmann and Robert Fine assess the contributions of Arendt and Adorno to a third problem—the need to theorize the conditions for global solidarity among world citizens. The difficulty of defending plurality and universality recurs in their fragmented contributions to global political theory. Arendt called for a qualified embrace of international law and institutions, but, more importantly, for political action from below, or localized struggles that "realize, and rectify, the universal"—in particular, the right of every individual to belong to humanity (p. 131). That this right could not be guaranteed by the nation-state was also Adorno's conviction. The challenge for him was to realize the possibility afforded by modern technologies for "a change in the form of society itself that enables cosmopolitan subjectivities grounded in dispersed, decentered 'homelands without frontiers'" (p. 149).

A fourth common problem area was anti-Semitism. Both thinkers placed the "anti-Semitic question" at the center of their critiques of modernity. Julia Schulze and Rensmann point to a particularly striking complementarity between Adorno's diagnosis of the "manipulative character" and Arendt's assessment of Adolf Eichmann. Modern anti-Semitism appears to be a symptom of the modern "ideology of objectivity" (p. 218). The immunization from reality produced by ideologies (Arendt) or pathological projections (Adorno) renders thought incapable of reflective judgment. Thus, the challenge of redeeming the particular recurs in the wake of "the unreflective abstractions that are constitutive of modern thinking" (p. 11).

The final two chapters explain how the critical standpoints of Arendt and Adorno transcended particularism and universalism. For both, the experience of exile became integral to a standpoint that occupies a "third place" beyond contextualist criticism (e.g., Michael Walzer, Richard Rorty) or the stance of the "universal intellectual" (e.g., Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault) (p. 241). As symbolized by Arendt's "self-conscious pariah," this space is epistemologically unique in that it affords the necessary remove from life in which alone the mental life—and perhaps the capacity to judge—can exist. It also allows the critic to "rectify the universal" by adopting the perspective of the "excluded, the marginalized, the different" (p. 240).

Exclusion has also been the burden of this short review of a collection that is brimming with insights. Suffice it to conclude that readers of Arendt will return to her work with fresh eyes to find a powerful confluence of critical theory, phenomenology, and modernism. Political theorists unfamiliar with Adorno will discover a thinker who was uniquely attuned to the possibilities and limits of the "philosophical discourse of modernity." Beyond this, *Arendt and Adorno* will open new vistas into the crises and opportunities of global modernity as it was experienced by two of the twentieth century's greatest minds.

Politics without Vision: Thinking without a Banister in the Twentieth Century. By Tracy B. Strong. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012. 424p. \$40.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592713001552

— Mika LaVaque-Manty, *University of Michigan*

This is a magisterial exploration of solutions to what Tracy Strong sees as one of the key philosophical and political problems of modernity: the unavailability of authoritative foundations for knowledge and action. *Politics without Vision* is a frequently surprising treatment of major political thinkers (Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, Max Weber, Sigmund Freud, V. I. Lenin, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt) and an even more surprising argument that this motley crew is united by a Kantianism unrecognizable to anyone whose Kant comes off the shelf of an introductory ethics course.

The title alludes to Sheldon Wolin's 1960 classic *Politics and Vision*, to which Strong offers his book as a sympathetic but critical alternative: This book focuses on figures "who reject the need for, and the possibility of, a 'vision'" (p. 7). Rejecting the possibility of a vision is to "think without a banister," a phrase Strong borrows from Arendt.

The book is about understanding the twentieth-century West through thinkers and actors who themselves tried to understand it and, in many cases, shaped it significantly. Of course, to make sense of the twentieth century, one needs to understand the nineteenth and, well, also much about the eighteenth. Such an attempt also can't ignore the nineteenth-century obsession with antiquity. No surprise, then, that the first quarter of the book is devoted to Kant (Chap. 1) and Nietzsche (Chap. 2), and that much of the discussion of Nietzsche focuses on his treatment of Greek music.

Strong's account is an alternative to liberalism and to those versions of democratic theory that have become most closely associated with postwar, Anglophone, liberal theory. Very few of the target theorists are mentioned explicitly; theories and theorists are seldom engaged (although a comparison of Arendt and John Rawls [pp. 360 ff] is an interesting exception). This is not a problem for the book, but it may be worth teasing out some of the dimensions of Strong's complaint against liberalism to see his contribution in higher relief.

The problem with postwar liberalism is that in seeking to prevent the possibility of the horrors of the twentieth century, it has "narrowed the possibilities for political thought" (p. 5). Liberal thinkers, liberals, and liberalism are preoccupied with coming up with a conception of a just society, principles that regulate it and its members' interactions, and roles in which its members will know just what to do and how to act appropriately. An ideal like this, for Strong's thinkers, is at best a panacea and at worst the very thing that leads modern citizens to "lives of quiet desperation," as the author frequently puts it, using Henry David Thoreau's famous phrase. For Strong, this confuses ethics with politics.

So "thinking without a banister" is not just rejecting metaphysical first principles as the justification for political judgments; it is rejecting intersubjectively valid arguments as responses to the question "What should be done?" The issue, then, is what political judgments *should* be all about. The answer is not simple, and to try to put it simply in a short review would do injustice to the book, but the answer begins with aesthetics.

Aesthetic means for Strong, as it meant for Kant, both things that have to do with art (our modern conception) and matters of sensibility in general. And in Strong's reading of Kant, which grounds the thought of the thinkers that follow in the book, an aesthetic judgment is about establishing a political community. To say "This is

beautiful" (Chap. 1) or "I am an American" (Conclusion) is to make a claim about a political community that is always explicitly addressed to others, always open, always contestable.

To call a book magisterial, as I did previously, is to praise, justly, its author's erudition, even wisdom. But "magisterial" also invokes the Herr Magister of an old-fashioned classroom, one whose word we must take on his authority alone. Why should we take Strong's word for it? We don't have to, of course. But as his treatment of his authors shows, the question of whom we take to be authoritative is at the central tension of democratic modernity: *All* can make real political judgments, yet most do not. In reality, the maturity needed for political claims making is the exception.

A reader might bristle at the implication of Strong's argument. After all, instead of just taking the author's word for it, the reader might challenge the book at three levels: Strong's reading of a given theorist, the family resemblance he adduces between his theorists, or, most importantly, the central claim that this particular family resemblance points to a conception of knowledge and political action that is a plausible/meaningful/compelling/appealing/feasible (circle your preferred choice) alternative to the currently dominant modes of liberal and democratic theory. A critical reader might say that the very openness and indeterminacy generated by "thinking without a banister" means that, in a way, the argument is at best suggestive.

As examples, consider two challenges that connect the first and third levels. While Strong takes pains to show that his reading of Kant's third *Critique* is consistent with Kant's treatment of metaphysics and epistemology in the first *Critique*, he almost entirely—and by design—avoids discussing Kant's practical philosophy, as developed in the *Groundwork*, the second *Critique*, and also in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, as well as in his political writings. Although many readers (certainly this reviewer) may agree with Strong that interesting questions about knowledge and action come together for Kant in the third *Critique*, some will find it problematic to ignore what Kant himself took to be his central treatments of action, namely, his practical philosophy.

Shifting now to the third level, this first-level challenge yields a question: Couldn't there be a kind of thinking without a banister that doesn't reject the possibility of intersubjectively valid *reasons* to accept principles, norms, and conceptions of roles? That kind of thinking doesn't have to result in a "vision," either. (We do have good reasons to worry about visionaries.) Indeed, one might argue for such a conception and suggest that it is captured in a genealogy that also begins with Kant but which crosses the Atlantic and finds its members around the ideas known as pragmatism.

I don't offer this as an argument against Strong's account, but as an example of an alternative. The general worry is,

as I suggested, that Strong's approach might seem to imply that the reader should just take his word for it. Throughout the book, the author himself is aware of the way that almost all of his theorists, not merely those he focuses on primarily but even frequent supporting actors such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, flirt with a risky elitism. He doesn't want to deny this risk; it is part of his argument that the risk is unavoidable. Interestingly, though, Strong offers a formulation of what it means to make claims on thoughts arrived at without a banister that does attenuate the worry, but which is very clearly *his*, not obviously in the framings of his authors. Like a judgment about art, a knowledge claim without a banister is an "invitation—which may be refused, accepted, or questioned—to join me and share, perhaps alter or correct, the experience I have" (p. 97). *Politics without Vision* itself is such an invitation.

Ethical Adaptation to Climate Change: Human

Virtues of the Future. Edited by Allen Thompson and Jeremy Bendik-Keymer. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012. 336p. \$52.00 cloth, \$27.00 paper.
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— Tina Sikka, *Simon Fraser University*

This volume offers a comprehensive and insightful analysis of the ethical and moral problems raised by climate change, as well as the various approaches to mitigation and adaptation that have arisen over the last few decades. The text takes a novel approach to climate change wherein human virtues are seen as the central drivers of ethical choice.

This perspective can be contrasted with consequentialist or deontological perspectives on climate change. On the one hand, consequentialist or utilitarian ethical systems, as applied in the area of normative environmental ethics, tend to base assessments of whether an environmental action is right or wrong on the outcome—that is, whether the outcome of an action will, for example, lead to maximum environmental protection. Deontological systems of ethics, on the other hand, judge actions on the basis of their adherence to a set of predefined rules or duties. In this context, it could be considered morally wrong or prohibitive to engage in actions that might lead to the extinction of species or destruction of sensitive ecological systems—even if it is economically desirable.

In opposition to these two approaches, this volume takes a virtue-ethics perspective on environmental challenge through which the primary boundaries regulating ecological choice, both inside and outside of institutions, is shaped by an understanding of the way that "excellence in human adaptation in the face of an unfolding climate crisis leads us to understand human flourishing in new ways" (Allen Thompson and Jeremy Bendik-Keymer, p. 13).

For example, in Chapter 2, William M. Throop articulates a virtue-based approach to ecological restoration by

means of a healing metaphor that elevates the virtues of humility, self-restraint, sensitivity, and respect for others. He contends that these virtues, when guided by such metaphors as gardening, design, and healing, must become the drivers of human action as they relate to ecological restoration (p. 48). All other chapters draw on similar understandings of the role of virtues in guiding ecological decision making and action.

One of the central themes of the volume, taken up by several authors, is the virtue of historical fidelity or historicity as it relates to ecological restoration. The question asked is whether attempts at repairing human-driven environmental degradation can and should aim at a pure historical consistency or some variation of this. Eric Higgs, for instance, argues that this kind of historicity forms one of the two "moral centers of gravity of ecological restoration (the other is ecological integrity)" (p. 96). Higgs is clear that while ecological restoration based on a pure sense of historical fidelity may be desirable in theory, it may not be realizable in practice. Ronald Sandler, in his chapter "Global Warming and Virtues of Ecological Restoration," also argues that this kind of pure historicity may no longer be possible. Yet he concludes that a sense of historical integrity, in guiding future environmental stewardship, remains important—particularly since it is often the case that "historicity serves in applying brakes to unfettered [human] interventions in ecosystems" (p. 98).

Another significant contribution of this volume to the environmental ethics literature involves the use of a capabilities approach to ethical theory and justice as articulated by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. According to this perspective, persons are thought to be virtuous "if they recognize, protect and promote the capabilities that help other individuals to flourish" (p. 131). These capabilities can be extended or integrated, and are by Jozef Keulartz and Jac. A. A. Swart, to animals and our shared environment.

In her chapter, Breana Holland also makes a persuasive case for treating our shared environment as a "meta-capability" wherein ecological systems are assessed according to their ability to protect the 10 human capabilities, which include life, bodily health, practical reason, other species, and control over one's environment, among others. Climate change, as Holland argues, disrupts the actualization of human capabilities by, for example, undermining practical reason and personal control through catastrophic weather events that challenge human agency. It can also weaken control over one's environment, which "requires being able to participate in political choices." Unforeseen climate events can make such actualization impossible in the case of, for instance, climate refugees who are "likely to face unknown periods of time" in which none of the "normal rights of citizenship are within [their] reach" (p. 153).

Assessing climate change from this perspective forms the basis of a plan for ecological resolution that alters our