



Attention Deficit Democracy

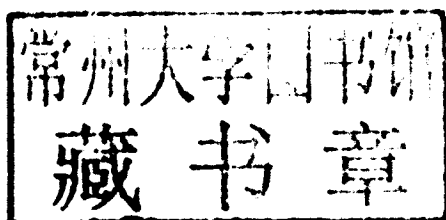
The Paradox of
Civic Engagement

Ben Berger

ATTENTION DEFICIT DEMOCRACY

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BEN BERGER



PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRINCETON AND OXFORD

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Published by Princeton University Press, 41 William Street,
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

In the United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 6 Oxford Street,
Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1TW
press.princeton.edu

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Berger, Ben, 1968–

Attention deficit democracy : the paradox of civic engagement / Ben Berger.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-691-14468-9 (hardcover : alk. paper) 1. Political participation—United
States. 2. Democracy. I. Title.

JK1764.B465 2011

323'.0420973—dc23

2011018236

British Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available

This book has been composed in Sabon

Printed on acid-free paper. ∞

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 6 5 4 3 2 1

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PREFACE

JUDITH SHKLAR NAMED Montaigne the “hero” of *Ordinary Vices* because “in spirit he is on every one of its pages, even when his name does not appear.”¹ Alexis de Tocqueville is the hero here. Tocqueville, author of the justly famous *Democracy in America*, approached democracy as a well-wisher who felt compelled to illustrate its potential excesses and deficiencies, not for the sake of undermining its credibility but for the sake of promoting its success. Tocqueville’s continuing relevance and resonance owe not only to his praise of democratic governance but also to his nuanced view of its limitations. He saw that democracy may require different institutions and practices in different periods and contexts, but that at root it must keep its citizens’ attention and energies focused on collective affairs—not always political, but collective—enough to avoid despotism, anarchy, or gross injustice. Yet while he understood that democracy’s citizens require collective action to protect their freedom from encroachment, he also grasped the pull and validity of self-interest and privatism. He grasped a central paradox of democratic freedom: citizens may freely choose disengagement, in opposition to their own long-term interests, but attempts to coerce their compliance generally fail. Tocqueville’s “new political science” promoted institutions and practices that might instruct and persuade citizens about the importance of collective action. But for democracy to succeed in the long run, citizens must want what they need.

I share Tocqueville’s commitments, and I approach democratic *scholarship* and *theory* in a similar manner: as a well-wisher illuminating certain foibles not for the sake of undermining democratic scholarship’s credibility but for the sake of promoting its success. Democratic scholarship has fallen in love with civic engagement, an evocative and appealing term representing community, political participation, social connectedness, trust, and moral virtue that has nonetheless caused more confusion than clarity. I criticize *civic engagement* (the term, not the goals it represents) and even call for its demise, but only so it can be reborn as the constituent parts—political, social, and moral engagement—that can help us to think and talk more clearly about modern democracy. I unpack “engagement” to reveal its primary components, attention, and energy, which have been recognized as political staples since Aristotle but which have proved fickle and elusive for just as long. Thinking critically about civic engagement leads us to think critically about attention and energy. Thinking critically

¹ Shklar (1984: 1–2).

about attention and energy leads us to follow Tocqueville's example in courting those resources for essential affairs without coercing them il-liberally and ineffectually.

But while this book parses *civic* engagement into *political*, *social*, and *moral* varieties, it focuses primarily on the political. Social engagement has been analyzed extensively already, especially in the work of Robert Putnam (under the name of civic engagement).² I reserve moral engagement for a separate book-length treatment. The main question in this book remains: from the perspective of political theory and political science, how good is political engagement and how far must we go to promote it? Some participatory democrats fall into a trap of assuming that we need as much political engagement as we can get, without adequately considering how much citizens want or how much it will cost. But as Tocqueville does, we too should honor the "democratic" part of democratic theory. In that spirit, I aspire not to tell citizens what they ought to want and what they must do but help them to consider their goals' hidden costs and then achieve their considered goals more effectively. I remain committed to political engagement personally, and I oppose its restriction from any citizens who desire it. But because promoting political engagement will require costly outreach, innovation, and institutional reform, we must do a better job of assessing its value and of considering whom political disengagement harms most. In particular, we must resist romantic notions of politics' intrinsic worth that at best defy demonstration and at worst court paternalism. Political engagement does matter, and democracy requires it, but how much and from whom? By doing more with our existing political attention and energy—eliciting more attention and energy to politics through suasion, education, and other voluntary means—and by reaching out to those citizens most likely to be hurt by political disengagement, we can get what we want and need from democratic government while preserving the freedom to do *without* politics for those who choose it.

Not long ago many observers feared that almost everyone would choose the latter freedom, and democracy would dissolve into what Tocqueville had called "license or tyranny."³ In the year 2000, Putnam's chronicle of forty years' declining social capital and civic engagement resonated widely with scholars and citizens alike.⁴ In 2008 Sheldon Wolin criticized the surface appearance, or "myth," of democracy that gilds a more sinister phenomenon of foreclosed public discourse and

² Putnam (1995, 1996, 2000).

³ Tocqueville (1969: 735). Hereafter *DA*.

⁴ Putnam (2000).

“inverted totalitarianism.”⁵ But while Putnam was pointing out valid, discouraging, long-term trends, Carmen Sirianni and Lewis Friedland were tracking a decade-long movement of “civic renewal” and a potentially rosier future for participatory democracy.⁶ And while Wolin was lamenting the end of public discourse, Barack Obama was electrifying citizens—not only via television but in town hall meetings and mobilization efforts modeled on grassroots organizing—and ultimately winning a historic, and historically participatory, national election. Myriad newspaper stories, magazine articles, and weblogs praised Obama’s message of hope and change, some claiming that his extensive outreach (and use of the Internet) had redeemed the promise of participatory democracy.⁷

Thus we see democracy portrayed simultaneously as on the ropes and on the rebound. Both portrayals have their appeals. When we look closely at engagement and pay attention to its constituent parts, we see that democracies throughout history—not just in the United States, but dating back to ancient Greece—have almost always struggled to focus their attention and energies on political affairs. When fully free to prioritize commerce, luxuries, leisure, entertainment, or family life over politics, citizens often do. Democracy can suffer. But American democracy has also featured more resilience than critics have anticipated. We citizens, free to opt out of politics, have evolved forms of engagement that may serve as functional substitutes for a time. More importantly, at intervals we have refocused our attention and energies on politics to foment for causes of deep concern.⁸ James Fallows characterizes our repeated political valleys and peaks, and our repeated expressions of despair and hope, as a uniquely American “cycle of crisis and renewal.”⁹ Indeed, from a fever pitch in 2008 even the so-called Obama revolution has flagged, with rough-and-tumble politics replacing campaign enthusiasm, an economic recession continuing unabated, and complex, partisan policy debates tiring all but the most ardent political junkies.¹⁰ Yet while political engagement on the left faded, a more populist and libertarian Tea Party

⁵Wolin (2008). For a similarly timed protest against “monocratic” government that has subverted true democracy while citizens turn the other way, see Meyers (2008).

⁶Sirianni and Friedland (2001).

⁷On the opposing side, many Republicans were mobilized by Sarah Palin’s personal charisma and some by opposition to Obama.

⁸According to Samuel Huntington, American politics have been characterized by “an overall pattern of political continuity and equilibrium, occasionally interrupted”—every three or four decades—“by the intrusion of passion, moralism, intensified conflict, reform, and realignment.” Huntington (1983: 130).

⁹Fallows (2010).

¹⁰Kennedy-Shaffer (2009).

movement mobilized around opposition to governmental activism.¹¹ In contrast to the 2008 general elections, marked by Democratic energy, the 2010 midterm elections evinced an “unprecedented level of political engagement by Republicans.”¹²

I mention these cycles to suggest that from the perspective of achieving our participatory potential we are neither so imminently endangered as the most dystopic writers fear nor so newly enhanced as Obama’s most ardent admirers had hoped. Democracy’s attention deficit, which has persevered on and off from ancient times to the present, probably cannot be cured but certainly can be treated. (By “attention deficit” I refer to the reality that most citizens enduringly pay much less attention to political issues and action than most theorists’ ideals have prescribed.) Understanding that limitation might chasten those who are tempted to increase political engagement by coercing it, abandoning liberalism, and might bolster those who are tempted to throw up their hands, abandoning democracy. The purpose here is to diagnose our limitations for the sake of progress that is both liberal and democratic.

• • • • •

This book’s roots date back to the late 1990s, when I was a graduate student at Harvard University. I served as one of many assistants for Robert Putnam’s landmark study, *Bowling Alone* (2000); his intellectual creativity and amazingly broad scope of inquiry inspired my own investigations. It was around that time when I began conceptualizing democracy—not just the American variety, but extending back to ancient Greece—as *attention deficit* democracy, a form of government that almost always makes observers wish that its constituents would attend to politics more closely and that almost always disappoints the critics’ desires. At the 1999 Midwest Political Science Association conference I presented a paper on Alexis de Tocqueville’s anticipation of “attention deficit democracy,” although the concept was still inchoate in my mind. At the same time, while studying democracy’s ups and downs I saw how closely linked the term *civic engagement* had become with conceptions of democracy’s well-being, and yet how few people could agree on its

¹¹The Tea Party” movement represents a uniquely American phenomenon: political activism aimed at quelling political activism (or, at any rate, governmental activism). As opposed to some Obama activists who hoped that the 2008 election would increase political engagement broadly and enduringly, Tea Party participants evince a more circumscribed aim. Their activism seems to accord with Hibbing and Theiss-Morse’s (2002: 2, 130) findings that many Americans do not want more political influence or political engagement but “just do not want decision makers to be able to take advantage of them,” and will occasionally mobilize simply to enforce the “most intense desire” not to be treated as “suckers.”

¹²Silver (2010).

definition. Through the intervening years I continued to marvel at civic engagement's growth, influence, and fuzziness. As this book developed I linked the concerns about (1) democracy's continuing struggles with attention, and (2) civic engagement's continuing struggles with clarity, even among those who studied and promoted it.

Several years ago I was chatting with the executive officer of a prominent nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting responsible citizenship on college campuses. The executive reflected on the organization's recent success at "introducing college students to civic engagement." She paused and then added, "whatever that means." As we laughed together I knew that the time for my book had arrived.

Many friends and colleagues have given valuable aid at various stages of this project's development: Rob Mickey, Jennifer Pitts, Sankar Muthu, Patchen Markell, Michael Ferguson, Sharon Krause, Bryan Garsten, Tamara Metz, Seth Green, Russ Muirhead, Michael Sandel, Harvey Mansfield, Robert Putnam, and Peter Berkowitz, among others. Andy Sabl and Sandy Green deserve special thanks for the countless hours they spent talking through ideas and interpretations, reading drafts, and lending moral support. Ian Malcolm at Princeton University Press has been the platonic ideal of a scholarly editor, as all who have worked with him already know.

Swarthmore's Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility has generously funded me as I developed my community-based learning courses, which have broadened my understanding of democracy's promises and challenges and improved this book in the process. Thanks also go to Project Pericles and to Swarthmore College for supporting my teaching and my scholarship, which have always enriched each other.

I am grateful to my family, on both the Berger and the Morton side, for helping to keep me grounded, and to my children, Harry, Arnie, and Tess—all born during the period that I worked on this book—for sweetening my life even as they contributed to my own attention deficit. Finally, I extend great love and gratitude to my wife, Debra Morton, a talented filmmaker, exceptional mother, and affectionate partner whose patience knows few bounds.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Pay attention to matters of importance.

—Diogenes Laërtius, *The Life of Solon*

Habitual inattention must be reckoned the great vice of the democratic spirit.

—Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

THIS BOOK ABOUT what Americans do and think begins by analyzing how we talk and write. The premise is that language matters; our choice of words may reflect or even affect our frames of mind. To borrow from Max Weber, humans are “suspended in webs of significance that [we ourselves have] spun,” ensnared in the logic that our choice of words dictates.¹ Such is the case with civic engagement. Born of a movement to analyze, promote, and possibly save democracy, nurtured with the best of intentions, the term *civic engagement* has grown out of control and has outlived its purpose, sowing more confusion than clarity. However, this book not only exposes the confusion but also turns it to our advantage. Acknowledging the problems with civic engagement terminology prompts us to examine it more closely, and a closer look can yield fresh insight into the unarticulated values and anxieties that have contributed to the term’s popularity. Through that exercise we can recognize more clearly the resources—especially attention and energy—that frequently flee from the public sphere and civil society but that must be protected and promoted for democracy’s sake. Thus we can learn from civic engagement even as we bid it goodbye.

Indeed, civic engagement as we know it is ready for retirement. That judgment might surprise the scholars, journalists, educators, and community leaders for whom civic engagement has become a household word. Since Robert Putnam first popularized the term in his 1993 political science classic, *Making Democracy Work*, it has spread through the pages of newspapers, Internet sites, academic books and journals, and mainstream

¹ Clifford Geertz attributed this widely cited line of thinking to Weber. Geertz interprets the self-spun web to denote culture, but language and rhetoric fit the metaphor just as aptly. Geertz (1973: 5).

political discourse.² Politicians praise it; foundations fund its study and implementation; educational institutions encourage their students to undertake it.³ Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) promote it in developing democracies. But like other buzzwords civic engagement means so many things to so many people that it clarifies almost nothing. Thus I come to bury civic engagement, not to praise it.

Scholars use civic engagement to describe activities ranging from bowling in leagues to watching political television shows, writing checks to political advocacy groups, and participating in political rallies and marches.⁴ For many journalists, public officials, and political activists civic engagement can mean everything from charitable giving to associational membership, political participation, artistic expression, or community service.⁵ Some maintain that civic engagement has declined in the United States and other liberal democracies over the past forty years. Others disagree, contending that civic engagement has simply changed its shapes and forms.⁶ We cannot easily judge these disputes because their advocates employ such disparate standards, using civic engagement to describe entirely different things. The conflicting parties do agree on one point: whatever civic engagement is, we need as much as we can get.⁷ But they are confused about its meaning and wrong about its value.

To be clear, no particular individual or group bears the blame for our terminological confusion. Despite the best of intentions we have inadvertently fallen into a linguistic trap by choosing flexible, broad terminology. Different thinkers have stretched the popular terms in their own desired directions, none of them violating rules of logic or grammar in the process. But the result has been many concerned friends of democracy talking past one another. Rather than blame those who have been trapped by civic engagement—which means all of us involved with its study and scholarship—we should disarm the trap and start afresh.

In that spirit this book advocates the end of civic engagement. Not the end of political participation, social connectedness, associational

² Among political theorists see, for example, Barber (1984 and 1998); Cohen and Arato (1992); Sandel (1996); Fishkin (1997); and Gastil and Levine (2005). Among political scientists see Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti (1993); Putnam (2000); and Skocpol and Fiorina (1999). Among sociologists and historians see Oldenburg (2001) and Ehrenhalt (1995).

³ In January of 2002 an Internet search for the term *civic engagement* using the Google search engine returned approximately 15,000 results. By January of 2011 the number exceeded 3.9 million.

⁴ Putnam (1995: 65–78); Schudson (1996: 17–27); Ladd (1999a); Barber (1998: 47–53).

⁵ Connolly (2006); Tillotson (2006); McGann and Johnstone (2006).

⁶ See, for example, Schudson (1998) and Ladd (1999a) for arguments that civic engagement has not declined but has been overlooked and misidentified.

⁷ As one among many examples of tremendously broad endorsements: “Civic engagement is one of the most important instruments in democracy.” Maiello, Oser, and Biedermann (2003: 384).

membership, voluntarism, community spirit, or cooperative and tolerant moral norms but rather the umbrella term, *civic engagement*, used to encompass all of those topics while clarifying none. Civic engagement as it is currently used includes political, social, and moral components, or the entire “kitchen sink” of public and private goods. It exemplifies Giovanni Sartori’s concern about “conceptual stretching,” or “the distortion that occurs when a concept, applied to new cases, does not fit the new cases.”⁸ The stakes go beyond mere semantics. Words frame our debates, shape our research agendas, and affect the ways in which we view the world. When our words yield “vague, amorphous conceptualizations” rather than widely accessible concepts—concepts that mean something similar for most people most of the time—we cannot easily study, operationalize, or discuss the social and political phenomena that surround us.⁹ In conversations about “making democracy work”—the subject of Putnam’s landmark work and also this book’s overarching theme—civic engagement confuses more than it illuminates, and hence it must go.

Yet only half of the term merits early retirement. We should put *civic* to rest while coming to grips with *engagement*. Civic simply means that a subject pertains to citizenship or a city, so it can easily be subsumed under the rubric of *political* without any loss of conceptual clarity.¹⁰ In fact, clarity prevails when we stop stretching civic to mean sociable, helpful, or trusting, as so often happens in civic engagement scholarship. But *engagement* possesses untapped potential, and part of my purpose is to tap it. Engagement is a uniquely appropriate term for discussing ways of making democracy work, but only if we understand its full significance. At present we do not. Literally, engagement entails a combination of attention and energy (or activity), the two primary components of political governance or any intensely interactive relationship.¹¹ And while civic engagement is this book’s nominal subject, attention and energy are its informal stars. When we worry about declining engagement, which we have done at increasing rates over the past fifteen years, we are worrying about the elusiveness of our attention and energy—and well we might.¹² Since the era

⁸Sartori (1970: 1034); Collier and Mahon Jr. (1993: 848). Democracy, for example, connotes widely divergent attributes in different scenarios, but scholars continue to use that single, stretched concept to describe divergent phenomena, and hence they talk past one another.

⁹Sartori (1970: 1034).

¹⁰Civic. Definitions 1a and 2a. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 1989.

¹¹Engagement can also denote an act or a condition, the act of engaging or the condition of being engaged. This presents difficulties for political science and political theory analyses, as I will discuss later in this book.

¹²Throughout this book I use the terms *energy* and *activity* interchangeably because activity is an actualization of our potential energy. They are not perfect synonyms, of course, but many other writers—ranging from contemporary scholars to canonical political theorists—use energy in precisely this sense: as an individual power (*dunamis*, in Aristotle’s

of ancient Greece, democracies have struggled to maintain these same resources. Attention involves selectively focusing one's wits on subjects that generate special interest or demand redress; activity involves following through on the subjects attended to, investing energy in their maintenance or resolution.¹³ Democracy's citizens must indeed be engaged, which is to say attentive and active. But attentive to what? Active in which ways? That vague designation, "civic," gives us little indication.

When sociologists laud civic engagement they commonly mean what I call *social* or *moral* engagement, people's attention and energies invested in social groups and networks or focused on moral reasoning and follow-through. When political theorists and political scientists laud civic engagement they often focus on what I call *political* engagement, people's attention to and activity in political issues and processes. These issues and processes require interaction with organs of the polity at any level of government. But democracy may flourish with only middling levels of political engagement if it is rich in social and moral engagement. That possibility goes against the belief, common among participatory democrats, that we need as much political attention and activity as we can get. Rather than disparage political engagement, we should recognize the costs as well as the benefits of promoting it and should remember that democracy requires a variety of dispositions, values, and behaviors.¹⁴ We should be asking which kinds of engagement—political, social, or moral—make democracy work, and how they might be promoted. Civic engagement (should be) dead; long live political, social, and moral engagement.¹⁵

The concern with making democracy work spans the history of political theory and political science, from ancient Greece to the present day. Aristotle, Rousseau, Madison, and Tocqueville all stress the importance of an attentive and energetically active citizenry. But (as I also advocate) they distinguish among different kinds of attention and activity; they understand that not all engagement is political, that social and moral engagement are equally vital to democracy's health, and that the three may

terminology) to be actualized in dynamic activity (*energeia*, in Aristotle). Aristotle, *De Anima* (1988: 412a22-8) and *Nicomachean Ethics* (1985: 1153a10).

¹³ James (1890: 404). For a more contemporary account see Cohen and Magen (2005).

¹⁴ The costs to which I refer include the sheer monetary cost of increasing political participation among a reluctant citizenry, whether through revitalized citizenship education, paid holidays for public deliberation (Ackerman and Fishkin 2004), or other forms of outreach, which I discuss in chapter 6. They also include the costs to individual freedom incurred by attempts to coerce political engagement through such initiatives as mandatory public service or compulsory voting (Lijphart 1997).

¹⁵ Others have recognized that civic engagement is too broad, and one set of scholars takes the promising but incomplete step of distinguishing between *civic* and *political* engagement. Zukin et al. (2006). However, for reasons discussed below their distinction does not resolve the difficulties it sets out to remedy.

stand in tension with one another. Too many present-day scholars, politicians, educators, and community activists ignore this critical approach and wrongly assume that participation in political processes and institutions, participation in social dynamics and networks, and participation in tolerant, responsible, moral agency always go together—lumped conveniently under the umbrella term *civic engagement*—and that to promote any of them is to promote all three.

But in fact they are distinct. Political engagement means activity and attention relating to the political processes and political institutions of local, regional, or national government. It can include voting, seeking or holding public office, attending town hall meetings, circulating a petition—any engagement whose purpose is to influence state actors and political outcomes.¹⁶ Social engagement means activity and attention relating to social groups, dynamics, and norms. It can include myriad involvements ranging from Putnam's bowling leagues to parenting groups to friendship circles, all of which are often categorized as civic engagement although they have no obvious connection to citizenship or the polis. Moral engagement means attention and activity relating to moral reasoning and moral agency.¹⁷ And while these different kinds of engagement can accompany one another—political engagement can involve social and moral components, for example—they need not do so.¹⁸

Political and social engagement can coexist with an absence of moral engagement—what the political theorist Hannah Arendt calls “thoughtlessness,” or a failure to “think what we are doing”—as in the cases of nationalist extremism, religiously inspired terrorism, and racial supremacists' hate groups.¹⁹ Conversely, tolerant, charitable, and socially engaged

¹⁶ Here I draw upon Weber's definition of the state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory,” and politics as “striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power either among states or among groups within a state.” Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in Weber (2007: 78). Power itself comprises a controversial subject, but an all-encompassing definition is not necessary for present purposes.

¹⁷ These definitions raise more questions than they answer; I will address some of the relevant questions in chapter 2.

¹⁸ Social engagement always involves at least some kind of moral engagement, an underlying consciousness of the appropriate norms of behavior. Most political engagement involves at least some kind of moral engagement, as well, an underlying consciousness of the appropriate goals to pursue through political action. But my category of moral engagement involves a more demanding kind of moral attention and energetic follow-through, in which moral reasoning is brought to the forefront. Further, some moral codes and moral reasoning are more appropriate for liberal democracies than others. Hitler's inner circle may have been morally engaged but with a kind of moral reasoning incompatible with liberal democracy.

¹⁹ Arendt (1963). Technically, Arendt's “thoughtlessness” describes total disengagement from moral reasoning. But as noted above, virtually everyone engaged in political or social dynamics participates in some moral code and exercises moral agency, although the moral

individuals may eschew political participation but still contribute to democracy's success. And very high levels of political engagement, in the absence of essential democratic ingredients such as responsive political institutions, can engender violent instability and jeopardize public safety.²⁰ Civic engagement enthusiasts often overlook these vital nuances.

My goal is to make democracy work better rather than make it work ideally. This book inquires into democracy's core requirements—those conditions that it must have (or avoid) in order to work at all—before positing its ideal features.²¹ Citizens might disagree about the latter because reasonable people hold divergent ideals, but we can probably agree upon the phenomena that make democracy fail: for example, rampant lawlessness, weak or unresponsive political institutions, capture of government by unrepresentative factions, or citizens widely unable to communicate, cooperate, or compromise.²² Grounding ourselves in “guarding against the worst” lets us ground ourselves with a measure of consensus.²³ But beginning with the worst does not mean dwelling on it exclusively. It leaves ample room for a chastened idealism that strives to achieve not the best but a variety of goods—not a single, greatest good that fits everyone equally but a framework in which individuals and communities can pursue pluralistic goals and values, including the values of individualism and communal cohesion.²⁴

codes with which they engage may not be compatible with liberal democracy. Further, Arendt's activity of “thinking,” a kind of moral reasoning, involves temporary withdrawal from the world of action. Chapter 2 of this book discusses these matters further.

²⁰See, for example, Bermeo (2003) and Armony (2004) for detailed chronicles of democracies or democratizing nations in which high and widespread political engagement accompanied instability, violence, and, at times, the end of democracy.

²¹For an excellent explanation of this core/ideal distinction, applied to liberal virtues, see Sabl (2005b: 207–35). See also Shklar, “The Liberalism of Fear” in Shklar and Hoffmann (1998: 3–21).

²²Like Shklar I “begin with what must be avoided,” but I broaden the scope of ills to include not only “the worst” but also the very bad. We must avoid totalitarianism, slavery, organized cruelty, and constant fear of the preceding—which are awful but not terribly likely in most Western democracies—and also radical atomization, enforced marginalization, and systematic unfairness (denying certain people or groups a reasonable chance of achieving goals their fellow citizens take for granted). The latter type of deprivation pales in comparison with the former but would be shunned by any who take liberal democratic values seriously. See Allen (2004) for a vivid account of twentieth-century forced marginalization in the southern United States and its incompatibility with democratic ideals.

²³Rosenblum (1998b: 48). Robert Dahl posits a similar aim and rationale: “Because it is easier to discover ways of reducing inequality than ways of achieving perfect equality (whatever that might mean), an advanced democratic country would focus on the reduction of the remediable causes of gross political inequalities.” Dahl (1989: 323).

²⁴Martin Krygier proposes “Hobbesian idealism” that begins with the worst but then “thinks simultaneously about avoiding evil and about pursuing good; about threat, about promise, and about their interplay.” Krygier (2005: 148).