

DEMOCRATIC AUTHORITY  
AT CENTURY'S END

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THERE IS WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT that American democracy is in trouble. Social scientists offer up a mountain of data showing that we are civically depleted, politically cynical and rootless, socially mistrustful, and personally fearful. This is a strange turn of events for a country associated with can-do optimism, with a robust democratic faith—indeed, a country once quite confident about its institutions and its ability to transmit them intact over time. An anemic and faltering democratic faith—a decline of confidence in our basic institutions—threatens to render us incapable of sustaining these institutions over the long haul.

*The Crisis of Democratic Authority*

One can approach this matter—this concern—from a number of angles. Social scientists who have tracked the sharp decline in associational life in America argue that the evidence points to nothing less than a crisis in “social capital formation,” by which they mean

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the forging of bonds of social and political trust and competence. Political and social theorists, of whom I am one, evoke Tocqueville and speak of the thinning out of that dense fabric—that social ecology—that historically did much of the hands-on work of democracy. Certainly the debilitating effects of rising mistrust, privatization, and anomie are many. For example: there is overwhelming empirical support for the popularly held view that where neighborhoods are intact, drug and alcohol abuse, crime, and teen-age childbearing diminish. Because families and neighborhoods are less and less likely to be intact, all forms of socially- and self-destructive behavior are on the rise among children and young people. The list goes on and on. For every Panglossian optimist there are, at present, a dozen with far gloomier assessments of our prospects. All of this suggests that the buoyant confidence that long sustained democratic prospects, especially the notion that human beings are capable of self-limiting freedom and sturdy self-government, is badly battered, and our public culture shows considerable signs of wear and tear.

I will focus on but one dimension of our discontents: the crisis in democratic authority. I am convinced that our collective decline of confidence flows, in part, from a general crisis of authority. That crisis cuts across all formative institutions: religion, education, families, and government. And it raises questions about the continuing power of what political theorists call “foundings” or founding moments.

Much overshadowed by the epistemological debate over foundationalism, a concern with specifically political foundings has faded. But it is worth recalling what such moments were about and what they set in motion. Imagine the following: a new civic order comes into being. Certain questions must be asked: What is the nature of this new order? How is it to be instituted among men and women? Where does authority reside? For no exercise of political power is legitimate without a general sharing of certain authoritative norms, standards, documents, institutions, even cultural narratives, stories, and songs. The democratic story added the following: Through pledges and promises—a social contract or covenant—persons

throw in their fortunes with one another. They seek not a perfect world, but a better one. And authority is necessary to its realization.

But perhaps we have lost this understanding of authority. At least so Hannah Arendt believed. Among the many strong claims lodged by Arendt, one must include the following: Authority, she claimed, “has vanished from the modern world. Since we can no longer fall back upon authentic and undisputable experiences common to all, the very term has become clouded by controversy and confusion.”<sup>1</sup> We will return to this strong argument below and consider whether it is, in fact, necessary as a precondition for a defensible account of authority. But, for now, it is important to note that Arendt here seems to suggest that we need the deep and wide sharing of an overarching, as well as grounding, set of experiences of labor, work, and action to fall back upon, and if we don’t have this, authority “vanishes.”

She continues: We late moderns “are no longer in a position to know what authority really is.” What we have lost, Arendt adds rather elliptically, is not “‘authority in general,’ but rather a very specific form which had been valid throughout the Western World over a long period of time.”<sup>2</sup> Arendt doesn’t note, though she might have, that much of that history of the Western World was not democratic—did not take shape as a democratic polity in the form we now honor and recognize. Perhaps, we might reply by way of rejoinder, if Arendt had limited her lament to traditional pre-democratic authority, she wouldn’t have wound up with such a mordant conclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Hannah Arendt, “What is Authority?,” *Between Past and Future* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1980) 91.

<sup>2</sup> Arendt, “What is Authority?,” 92. Portions of this discussion of Arendt and authority are drawn from my essay “The Question Concerning Religious Authority,” prepared for a conference at Notre Dame. This paper, along with the other conference papers, is published in *Religion and Contemporary Liberalism*, ed. Paul Weithman (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997). The primary question taken up by participants at the Notre Dame event had to do with the inclusion or exclusion of “religious language” from political life.

But Arendt is cutting deeper than that. Democratic authority, too, she would argue, depends on taking certain truths as self-evident, certain things for granted. The sovereignty of the people is never absolute but checked, shaped, and reformulated in practice through a variety of institutions that help to modulate the passions and to give shape and form to democratic interests. And these institutions, in turn, have always taken a good bit of their legitimating force from some point *outside* themselves—in nature or “nature’s God,” for example. In a sense, democrats historically worried that the self-sovereignty of the people might become an absolute principle, a tyranny in practice. So it could never be a law simply unto itself. Hence constitutionalism, with its long, complex history—a history far too vast to go into in any detail here. The American Constitution’s legitimacy derived, in part, from the nobility and right reason of its founders—consider here the American reverence, until recently, for the Founding Fathers. But that “right reason” wasn’t simply theirs, a product of their own self-confirming ratiocinations; rather, it was “right reason” as discernment of a certain kind, discovering (not inventing) certain perduring principles that pre-dated (at least *in situ*) the lives of Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, Hancock, Hamilton, and the others.

Let’s return to Arendt’s account. If she is correct, the brief narrative just recalled of America’s founding no longer holds water or, rather, it is water dripping rapidly through the holes of a sieve called “late modernity.” The problem with our inability to distinguish authority from other human possibilities and enactments generates and perpetuates a terrible mistake, indeed, a base confusion—namely, the tendency to conflate power, coercion, even violence with authority. Mao did this most famously, of course, with his statement: “Power grows out of the barrel of a gun.” No niceties about authority here. Just brute force and legitimation will follow once the enemies are vanquished. Arendt blasted Mao for this. What grows out of the barrel of a gun is violence, not power. Failing to distinguish between different modalities and ways of being in a political world, we fall into something akin to the abyss, conceptually and even

politically. We lose the past as “the permanence and durability” of the world melts away. This loss is

tantamount to the loss of the groundwork of the world, which indeed since then has begun to shift, to change and transform itself with ever-increasing rapidity from one shape into another, as though we were living and struggling with a Protean universe where everything at any moment can become almost anything else.<sup>3</sup>

Arendt singles out for critical fire tendencies within philosophic liberalism, by which she refers to that mode of thought most deeply implicated in the conflation of coercion and authority. (Were she alive today, she would no doubt find other targets.) This conflation, in turn, spawns political actors who similarly disdain any distinction between authoritarianism, on the one hand, and authoritative rule of governance, on the other. But authority is not tyranny; indeed, the resort to tyranny is a sign that legitimate authority has broken down and given way to violence.

Historically the legitimate authoritative figure was one who was bound. He or she was bound by law, bound by tradition, and bound by the force of past example and experience. Being bound in particular ways guaranteed a framework for action and helped to create and to sustain particular public spaces—whether of church, polity, or other institutions of social life. The bound authority figure was, therefore, not free to do just anything, to make just any claim and to make it stick. *That* was the lawlessness of the tyrant, whether the King who had become tyrannical and might, therefore, be killed as a scourge to his people and a rebel against God (here John of Salisbury’s *Politicraticus* is my touchstone); or the twentieth-century tyrant, a Hitler or a Stalin, who knows and recognizes neither the laws of God, nor of nature, nor of human decency (a “common sense,” in Arendt’s formulation) and makes himself a law unto him-

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<sup>3</sup> Arendt, “What is Authority?,” 95.

self, hence an enactor of capricious terror and violence. To see this sort of thing as an instance of unusually harsh authority is, for Arendt, to vulgarize; it is to do violence to the truth, to what she unabashedly called the stubborn fact of the matter. Authority and obedience or faithfulness are twins. But in obeying—in offering fealty to a tradition that is shared, constitutive of the self and of a world—one remains free, free yet bound. This bounded freedom is the only way to guarantee creation of a common space, simultaneously to constrain yet to nurture and to make possible human action.

### *Authority in the Political Realm*

Arendt was most concerned with a political world constituted by authority—a world, therefore, that rejected despots as unfit to rule. For the power to coerce is incompatible with the freedom of others and “his [the tyrant’s] own freedom as well. Wherever he ruled there was only one relation, that between masters and slaves.”<sup>4</sup> Between masters and slaves (or so the Greeks thought) there was no possibility of commonality or a common tradition; the gulf was impassable. All of subsequent political thought, at least until late modernity, is an attempt to establish “a concept of authority in terms of rulers and the ruled.... and there is no philosopher-king to regulate human affairs once and for all.”<sup>5</sup> This, then, involves a search for a community of equals who share ruling and being ruled and share as well a mutual commitment to authoritative rules and norms.

For the life of the polity was not just about life but about the “good life.” This good life plays a formative and educative role. It inducts the next generation into a way of being in the world made possible only when free people submit to authority mutually—the sort of authority created when citizens pledge themselves to something, hold one another accountable, keep their promises. As well, in

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<sup>4</sup> Arendt, “What is Authority?,” 105.

<sup>5</sup> Arendt, “What is Authority?,” 116.

Arendt's account, authority is natural in the pre-political realm of necessity. (This is where she located the family, for example.) But authority takes on something—only something—of a volitional dimension in that sphere of action we call politics. The word *auctoritas*, deeded to us by those most indefatigable of antique law-givers, the Romans, derives from *augere*, to augment, to deepen. What is deepened is an authoritative moment of political birth or founding. Without such an authoritative moment, there is only violence or a rampant antinomianism.

Fast forward to the present moment. It seems that we have arrived at a point where our options get cast either as a desperate attempt to reaffirm and reassert traditional modes of authoritative determination of the sort Arendt argues modernity has shattered, on the one hand, or, on the other, as participation in a kind of political and epistemological free-for-all. We are, then, stuck increasingly in a political realm in which, lacking either recognition of, or commitment to, an awareness that “the source of authority transcends power,” we are confronted daily “by the elementary problems of human living-together.”<sup>6</sup> Because we place so little confidence in authoritative norms and claims, nearly everything at every moment is up for grabs. By Arendt's reckoning we aren't doing a very good job of confronting this crisis of authority. If we see the world as a series of volitional acts, as if anything that “I” affirm marks a new beginning, we are in a world of radical antinomianism and romantic flailing that all too easily fuels cries of “oppression” whenever any constraint is put on the self, whenever the self is called upon to bend the knee or to bow the head before the authority of God within a religious tradition or, in politics, to aver the legitimacy of a constitutional regime even if we disagree with it in particulars. One effect of the crisis of authority, then, is that all institutional rules of the sort needed to define institutions, to hold them intact in order that they might create space within which individuals can act and react, can be formed and re-formed, are construed as tyranny.

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<sup>6</sup> Arendt, “What is Authority?,” 141.

It seems to be the case that, traditional belief over time growing less reliable as an authoritative standard, human beings in Western democracies turned to constitutionalism and adherence to certain fundamental laws and rules. Initially, these were not merely or simply procedural but exuded a strong normative content, an image of what citizens might aspire to, what a democracy should live up to. This dense latticework of laws is now under assault, condemned as nothing but the window dressing for the power machinations of a narrow-minded, self-serving elite. And there is just enough truth in this charge that we all feel the sting. The upshot is that cynicism is deepened. If one sees nothing but coercion and arbitrariness in any proclamation of "self-evident truths," there is nowhere to repair to. If all is power and violence, one grabs as much for oneself as one can. This helps to account for the fear and worry, even despair, surrounding American democratic life at century's end. We are unable to justify authority in any robust sense, but without justifiable authority we flounder and flail politically. Why should anyone be obliged to adhere to law if all that one is confronted with is so many arbitrary injunctions dressed up as natural law or right or the good opinion of humankind?

### *Democracy and Commonality*

Let's dig a little deeper. Remember that Arendt spoke both of the "groundwork of the world" and of "experiences common to all" as what we have lost and yet what we cannot do without if authority, including democratic authority, is to endure or to revive. And remember that the alternative to authority is not some free-form utopia but coercion, domination, violence, and unaccountable methods and systems of manipulating persons. Let's begin with the standard that Arendt argues we can no longer live up to, or perhaps even aspire to, namely, "experiences common to all." One wonders if Arendt could have meant this in the strong sense. Even in a relatively self-contained Greek *polis* of the sort Arendt much admires and in which authority, presumably, was intact, experiences weren't "common to all," as she herself notes when she mentions that

between masters and slaves there can be no commonality. But there is another sense, a more American sense, if you will, that goes like this: Democracy requires laws, constitutions, and authoritative institutions. But it also depends on democratic dispositions, those habits of the heart that are formed and forged *within* the framework such institutions provide. The ever-prescient Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America*, offered foreboding thoughts along these lines. He warned of a world very different from the robust democracy he surveyed. He urged Americans to take to heart a possible corruption of their way of life. In his worst-case scenario, narrowly self-involved individualists—radically voluntaristic and disarticulated from the saving constraints and nurture of overlapping associations of social life and the horizon of an authoritative set of laws with extra-legal justification—would require more and more controls from above to muffle at least somewhat the disintegrative effects of what Tocqueville called “bad egoism.”

Should this world of associational life, a world in which citizens were both free and bound, weaken, bad egoism and the isolation that resulted from it would, in turn, generate new forms of domination: democratic despotism. The social webs that once held individuals intact having disintegrated, the individual would find himself or herself isolated, impotent, exposed, and unprotected. Into this power vacuum would move a centralized, top-heavy state or other centralized and organized forces (the maw of consumerist society comes to mind) that would, so to speak, push social life to its lowest common denominator. For Tocqueville, religious belief “was inseparable from free government and free public life because it was the channel of a self-imposed moral restraint that shaped and, in so doing, liberated the individual for participation in the republic.”<sup>7</sup> The collapse of religious authority necessary to sustain the institutions that engage in ethical formation fuels a political crisis in turn.

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<sup>7</sup> George Armstrong Kelley, *Politics and Religious Consciousness in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1974) 47. This summary of Tocqueville’s position is drawn from Kelley’s wonderful book.

That crisis helps to generate a deepening crisis in self-formation, in the very standing of the self itself. And so on.

Arendt, too, saw this coming, or some version of it. She detected it in the assault on authority in every arena—including the family and the school. She saw it in the attack on truth, the “blurring of the dividing line between factual truth and opinion....”<sup>8</sup> Knowing, as she did, how totalitarian societies can simply make embarrassing facts disappear down the memory hole, she embraced factual truth as the last redoubt of political possibility, by which she meant the need to have a record, to begin from some common understanding. But common understanding is not the same as “experiences common to all.” I agree with Arendt that liars have an easier time of it than truth-tellers in this world, and that plausibility may even be on their side because they can concoct tight systems that appear to contain everything and control for every contingency. But I am not so much concerned with that as with the continuing possibility of “common understanding” despite vastly different experiences. For this is the democratic wager. To cast it epistemologically: You cannot found and sustain a democratic society if you presume experiences are so vastly different for distinct categories and groups of people that the gulf thus created is, in principle, unbridgeable. A likely scenario in such a situation is that any possibility of a rough and ready sharing of moral norms and aspirations goes out the window. Some might argue that this isn't necessarily devastating because it leaves political authority, including the legitimacy of certain procedural norms, intact. But that doesn't seem a viable option over the long run. Procedures themselves are substantive and reflect a moral vision. We must have enough trust and confidence in the propositions that ground a democratic experiment, and that give rise to legal and political procedures and regularities (a system of criminal justice, for example) that we know we can repair to these propositions, whether in solidarity or in opposition. The matter can be cast rather starkly: Unless citizens or would-be citizens are able to repair

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<sup>8</sup> Hannah Arendt, “Truth and Politics,” *Between Past and Future*, 250.

to some shared political and normative vocabulary, a democratic society cannot sustain itself over time.

*Frederick Douglass: An Appeal to Commonality*

Let's consider this claim through a concrete example of solidarity and opposition. I will draw upon Frederick Douglass's oration delivered on July 5, 1852, at Rochester, New York, on "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" He begins by asking: "Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? and am I, therefore, called upon to bring our humble offering to the national altar...?"<sup>9</sup> His answer is not in the affirmative: "I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you this day rejoice are not enjoyed in common." You cannot drag a man forward in fetters before the temple of liberty and call him to join you in a "joyous anthem." God does not take such mockery lightly. And he will smite the nation that does. Note that Douglass can here draw upon a common religious and civic idiom to drive home his point to his listeners. The nations are under God's judgment: woe and behold!

Above all the joy, Douglass hears the "mournful wail of millions." And he will not forget them, these bleeding "children of sorrow." For his subject is "American Slavery." And when you see things from the slaves' point of view, why do they look differently? What you see is an America "false to the past, false to the present," and binding herself "to be false to the future." Following his thundering exposé and denunciation, Douglass begins to build toward common understanding. And, he insists, there already is a base to build on. We

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<sup>9</sup> Frederick Douglass, *Autobiographies* (New York: The Library of America, 1994). The great Fourth of July Oration, from which all quotations are drawn, appears as an Appendix to the first "Narrative" and can be found on pages 431-435.

don't have to prove that slaves are men: "That point is conceded already. Nobody doubts it. The slaveholders themselves acknowledge it in the enactment of laws for their government. They acknowledge it when they punish disobedience on the part of the slave." This is a brilliant move on Douglass's part, for he shows the ways in which, through their incorporation into a legal and constitutional system, the status of the slave here affirmed runs counter to the degraded status slavery presupposes: "What is this but the acknowledgment that the slave is a moral, intellectual, and responsible being." So, affirming that equal "manhood of the Negro race," looking at the hundreds of tasks Negroes are called upon to do and are, in fact, doing in slavery and in freedom, they have nothing more to prove. And because your founding documents argue "that man is entitled to liberty? that he is the rightful owner of his own body?" where can you go to justify slavery? You must repair to a bad theology, but that is blasphemous on its face.

So: "What to the American slave is your Fourth of July? I answer, a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim." In "revolting barbarity and shameless hypocrisy, America reigns without a rival." Douglass can make this argument—and he knows that he can make this argument—because he has access to certain standards, norms, and "self-evident truths," constitutional and sacred, that his own countrymen are flouting and, in so doing, they are violating their own civic temple and poisoning their own political well. Douglass bridges the gap that separates the experiences of slave and free by appealing to understanding common to all—even, he insists, the slaveholder himself. Authority is alive and well in this account because certain shared norms and idioms, a language of denunciation and affirmation, is sturdy and reliable. Douglass knows he can count on it. Most of our great democratic reformers knew they could count on it. It was possible to move from vastly different experiences to common understanding, because there was a common understanding on some deep level already—else the slave, the disenfranchised woman, and the disempowered factory worker wouldn't have a language of protest available that called those with different

experiences to account. In fact, one can presuppose certain commonalities.

*Immanence: The Loss of Democratic Authority*

Let's take up Arendt's other reason for claiming that authority has simply disappeared from modernity. It was, you will recall, that the "groundwork of the world" itself has shifted and become uncertain. The permanence and durability of the world has melted, or is melting, before our eyes. I can't be certain what all Arendt has in mind here, so I will give her insight a twist that I owe to Charles Taylor in his essay, "The Immanent Counter-Enlightenment."<sup>10</sup> Denying transcendence "means denying that human life finds any point beyond itself." The twentieth-century process of denying transcendence has been powerful and effective. It means that man really has become his own measure. We find no meaning in anything above or beyond our-selves. Lived life exhausts itself; it is self-encapsulated. This doesn't mean we accept what is given. It means that, increasingly, we reject the whole idea that anything is given; rather, we presume anything and everything is constructed. We are the masters of our own fate and so on. But the upshot, over time, is a kind of flattening out of human possibility and a deep sense of emptiness. People yearn for meaning. But the prevailing climate of opinion dictates that they must find it immanently, so to speak. (Taylor writes of a "metaphysics of immanence.") Small wonder we have become so fascinated with end-things, with death and violence and experiences on the edge: they alone promise to deliver much needed relief from the self circling endlessly round itself.

In this world of absolute immanence, where all is flattened out and no standards can be upheld, authority simply cannot survive. For authority is about distinctions and accountability; it is about norms and standards and trying to live up to them; it is about seeing one-

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<sup>10</sup> Charles Taylor, "The Immanent Counter-Enlightenment," unpublished essay.

self in a long stream of life; it is about being able to utter the ancient prayer, "That I may see my children's children and peace upon Israel." Our humanism has become anti-humanistic without at least some sort of transcendental aspiration, without some notion of a higher, a beyond, a "something more," a solidarity that is not reducible to the concatenation of all our private interests. Perhaps one acknowledges a groundwork—a grounding—a notion that "here I stand" on this ground, only if one acknowledges the possibility of some sort of "greater than" or "higher" or "above." I don't know. But it surely isn't merely historic fortuity that democracy's trials and the further erosion of democratic legitimacy go hand-in-hand with the loss of common understandings or, perhaps better put, with our insistence that there are no common understandings to be found and, as well, that our own ends and purposes are ultimate, that there is no authority, human or divine, who can judge us.

What moves can we possibly make to restore some of the texture of a world in which authority makes claims on us and we, in turn, on it? For authority helps to solidify the world, indeed, helps to make a world out of what would otherwise be William James's "blooming, buzzing confusion." Given our current dilemma, we seem to seek more of what ails us by hobbling ourselves in advance when it comes to robust arguments about this important matter. If we talk "rights talk," we can say pretty much anything we want. But if we start to talk "norm talk," we are accused of wanting to start a new civil war. We are urged to retreat where we should advance, and we advance where we would be well advised to retreat.

### *False Pride and Democratic Demise*

A recuperative project must preserve our commitment to the dignity of the human person, to democracy under law, and to traditions of political and religious faith in a world in which each is under assault. No one thinker or book or conference can offer a definitive statement as to the shape and scope of such a project. But I am obliged, in light of my call for a renewal of democratic authority or,

perhaps better put, for a deeper recognition that authority still makes claims on us, to offer a set of necessary recognitions—necessary in the logical sense and necessary in the historical sense, in a world in which experiences “common to all” seems an impossible standard. But that depends, in part, on how one thinks about what we might have “in common.” In arguing that we do, perhaps, have more in common than we may believe—for we all breathe the rarified air of self-overcoming and putative mastery so characteristic of late modernity—I will turn to St. Augustine’s brilliant unpacking of false pride.<sup>11</sup> For that seems to me to lie at the heart of much of our current trouble. It is pridefulness that holds up as normative a view of the self constructed in such a way that she is immunized from the claims made on her by others. False pride is the presumption that we are the sole and only ground of our own being. False pride lies behind much of the contemporary assault on all authoritative claims and traditions. We deny our birth from the body of a woman. We deny our dependence on her and others to nurture and to tend us. We deny our dependence on friends and family to sustain us. We most certainly deny what Frederick Douglass so fervently believed—that the nations are under God’s judgment. This false pride is the name Augustine gives to a particular form of corruption and deformation.

Pridefulness denies our multiple and manifold dependencies—and authority, in fact, is one way we have devised to recognize such dependencies. Those who refuse to recognize dependence are those most overtaken by an urge to dominate, or “the need to secure the dependence of others,” an observation from Peter Brown, who goes on to argue that “first the Devil, then Adam, chose to live on their own resources; they preferred their own fortitudo, their own created strength, to acknowledging their dependence upon God.”<sup>12</sup>

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11 Here I draw upon my book *Augustine and the Limits of Politics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996).

12 Peter Brown, “Political Society,” *Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Robert A. Markus (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1972) 320-321.

Augustine writes, every “proud man heeds himself, and he who pleases himself seems great to himself. But he who pleases himself pleases a fool, for he himself is a fool when he is pleasing to himself.”<sup>13</sup>

In late modernity we have all become self-pleasers and self-pleasers cannot sustain institutional forms, for that seems nothing but the imposition of unacceptable constraint on a subject deemed sovereign. So we are in the soup. We lament that the center does not hold. But we will not permit ourselves to be “held,” so to speak. Our political commitments are thin. Our religious commitments increasingly chafe under any constraint. Thus, we daily surrender a bit more of the pluralistic, communal, formative dimension of that world known as the American democracy—one that requires institutional robustness of considerable variety. We are all alone with our freedom and coerced in ways beyond our imaginings. We may well and truly be approaching the moment Hannah Arendt dreaded—the moment when the actions of free citizens and the power they create when they come together is a frozen tableaux from a lost time and place, rather than an ever present possibility.

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<sup>13</sup> Augustine, “Psalm 122: God is True Wealth,” *Selected Writings, Homilies on the Psalms* (New York: Paulist, 1984) 250.