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CLAREMONT

REVIEW OF BOOKS

A Journal of Political Thought and Statesmanship



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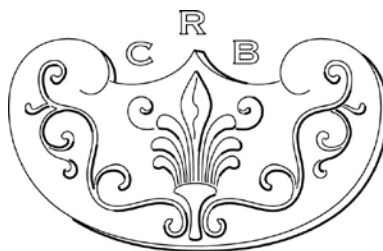
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Essay by Michael Anton

WILL THE REAL AUTHORITARIAN PLEASE STAND UP?

ONE OF THE NICE THINGS ABOUT A core curriculum—sadly disappearing from most of higher education—is that it forces you to read books you would otherwise have skipped. Although this can be painful in the moment, it often pays off in unexpected ways.

Sigmund Freud is not a writer I would have picked up had he not been assigned. But I'm glad he was. The older I get, and the more of the Left I see, the more useful becomes Freud's concept of "projection," an unconscious defense mechanism that protects the ego from guilt or anxiety. It has amazing explanatory power and can help one make sense of a trove of recent books by left-wing writers, and one disgruntled former conservative, that blame Donald Trump for "authoritarianism" in American politics.

Fake Science

THE MID-20TH-CENTURY CREATORS OF the concept of "authoritarianism" appear to have cooked their books. In the pathbreaking work *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), the authors—including German sociologist Theodor Adorno, one of the leading lights of the Frankfurt School—created

four "scales" measuring anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism, political and economic conservatism, and fascism. All of these indicators, they alleged, do not merely correlate highly, they are inherently connected. If you score high on the scale for one trait, you almost certainly score high on them all. Thus were the hitherto respectable—even fundamentally American—tenets of conservatism, and also the inborn and inexpugnable passion of love of one's own, now "scientifically" linked to anti-Semitism and fascism. Which is to say, to Auschwitz.

Coming in 1950, this was explosive stuff. The Left naturally intuited that here was the perfect moment to forever tar the Right with Nazism.

Nor was that all. The traits that place one on the "F-scale" (for fascist) include conventionalism, aggression, submission (hard to see how these go together, but let's forge on), superstition, predilection for stereotypes, worship of power and "toughness," destructiveness, cynicism, a propensity for projection, and—channeling Freud while anticipating the '60s—sexual hang-ups. All of which the authors identified as mental disorders. Conservatives were not only proto-fascists, but also borderline insane.

The whole apparatus is a high-toned ancestor of those clickbait articles on pop-left-wing websites with headlines like "Study Shows: Conservatives Meaner than Liberals" or "Red State Average IQs 10 Points Lower than Blue." Which is exactly what it is: "science" twisted to serve and popularize leftist political ends.

What Harvard's Nathan Glazer said of the original study—"the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* seem quite oblivious to authoritarianism on the political left, and so set a precedent for studying authoritarianism without need for unpleasant self-examination"—may not be true to the letter of these present-day updates. Hugo Chavez, for example, is a sometime target. But it is true to their spirit. One gets the sense that Chavez and other leftists, such as Greece's Alexis Tsipras, are included not to demonstrate genuine belief that authoritarianism cuts both ways, but as inoculations against charges of left-wing bias. *How can that be, when I criticize Chavez on pages 16-19?*

These new exposés on the threats to democracy have the same dry social science-y surfaces that obscure (if not exactly conceal) polemical cores. President Trump's name appears in the title of only one, David Frum's,

but he is the real subject of all six. Their purpose—with perhaps one-and-a-half exceptions—is, like *The Authoritarian Personality*, to clothe polemic in scholarly robes, this time to make Trump's legion of haters feel more high-minded about their rage, but mostly to misuse "science" to categorize Trump as "authoritarian." The finding being "scientific," it is therefore irrefutable and not subject to debate. "Authoritarianism" being beyond the pale, thus so is Trump and all he represents.

Which Side?

WHAT, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORS reviewed here, is authoritarianism? They all attempt definitions, which are more or less similar. We may therefore take one as representative. The authoritarian, say Harvard government professors Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt in *How Democracies Die*,

- 1) Rejects, in words or action, the democratic rules of the game, 2) denies the legitimacy of opponents, 3) tolerates or encourages violence, or 4) indicates a willingness to curtail the civil liberties of opponents, including the media.

These traits are supposed to transcend the political spectrum. Yet aside from a few leftward jabs, the authors—not just Levitsky and Ziblatt but of all of these books—ascribe them almost entirely to the Right.

But in recent years who, really, has rejected the hallowed democratic rules of the game? It was not conservatives who insisted on the modern, centralized administrative state whose unelected apparatchiks rule by distant undemocratic fiat. Nor was it the Right that, throughout the West, sought to further outsource sovereignty and decision-making power to transnational bodies.

Who is it, really, who denies the legitimacy of their political opponents? These books were written before the Left recently went into overdrive, heckling and surrounding their opponents in public, at restaurants, even outside their own homes. But that is no excuse. Do the authors not remember the Left's persistent effort to delegitimize George W. Bush as "president-select" and "not my president"? They point to Donald Trump's comments before the 2016 election that he might not recognize the result, as if this settles the question. Why should any candidate pledge to recognize a result in advance, before he, she, or anyone else could possibly know if there were any irregularities? Especially since, despite the authors'

handwaving, such irregularities are all too frequent in our system. They point to the scarcity of proved cases, ignoring the reason: leftist and left-allied authorities show little to no inclination to investigate, much less solve, the problem.

Who, really, tolerates, encourages, and commits political violence? One can—as the authors of course do—point to certain inflammatory things candidate Trump said on

ern Poverty Law Center might to find brown-shirts around every corner, there is no conservative equivalent of Antifa.

Who today indicates a willingness to curtail the civil liberties of opponents, including the media? Again, President Trump has said some ill-advised things on this score. But most of our authors acknowledge, quietly, that he hasn't actually *acted* on any of it. Meanwhile, the Left openly argues against, and sometimes actively disrupts, their opponents' right to assemble. Which side argues openly for curtailing the right to freedom of speech—but only for their opponents? Which side is allied with mega-monopolies that use or threaten to use their outsize media power to restrict their adversaries' discourse?

Out of Bounds

IN *THE PEOPLE VS. DEMOCRACY*, YASCHA Mounk, another Harvard government professor, appeals to the late political scientist Robert Dahl to define the essence of "democracy." The first three elements—free elections, full suffrage, and protection of civil liberties—are fine as far as they go. But the fourth criterion is "[t]he absence of nonelected 'tutelary' authorities (e.g., militaries, monarchies, or religious bodies) that limit elected officials' power to govern." Notice anything missing there? Can you think of any other "nonelected 'tutelary' authority," powerful today, that might belong on that list? That is, if it were actually "absent"?

It gets worse. Levitsky and Ziblatt write in praise of "[o]ur Constitution, our national creed of freedom and equality, our historically robust middle class, our high levels of wealth and education, and our large, diversified private sector." Remind me: was it liberals or conservatives who spent the last, oh, 125 years complaining that the Constitution was flawed from the beginning, hopelessly compromised by selfishness and racism and much else, outmoded and in dire need of modernization by judicial fiat? Was it the Left or the Right who gradually eroded our freedoms through tangles of needless rules and regulations? Was it the Left or the Right who called equality a fraud unless government could somehow ensure equality of outcome? Was it the Left or the Right who trivialized our education system? Was it the Left or the Right who consistently denounced wealth as soul-killingly bourgeois and attacked the private sector at every turn?

"All these," Levitsky and Ziblatt continue, "should inoculate us from the kind of democratic breakdown that has occurred elsewhere." But they haven't. Because of Trump.

Books discussed in this essay:

The Authoritarian Personality,
by Theodor W. Adorno,
Else Frenkel-Brunswik,
Daniel Levinson, and Nevitt Sanford.
Harper & Brothers,
990 pages, out-of-print

How Democracies Die,
by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt.
Crown Publishing, 320 pages, \$26

*The People Vs. Democracy:
Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and
How to Save It*, by Yascha Mounk.
Harvard University Press,
400 pages, \$29.95

*Trumpocracy: The Corruption of the
American Republic*, by David Frum.
HarperCollins, 320 pages, \$25.99

How Democracy Ends,
by David Runciman.
Basic Books, 256 pages, \$27

*Can It Happen Here?: Authoritarianism
in America*, edited by Cass R. Sunstein.
Dey Street Books, 496 pages,
\$17.99 (paper)

*Anti-Pluralism: The Populist Threat
to Liberal Democracy*,
by William A. Galston.
Yale University Press, 176 pages, \$30

the trail. Yet during his rallies, when things got out of hand, far more often than not it was anti-Trump "protesters" who initiated or provoked violence. And that's to say nothing of the rallies that were not able to take place because protesters prevented them through violence or threats of violence. It's also to say nothing of the many instances of anti-speech violence on campuses around the country, all of it initiated by the Left. Try as the South-

And because of the allegedly ugly sentiments that led to Trump.

All six books purport to give some credence to those sentiments. But most do so in the tone one takes with a crazy person to whom one must make a few apparent concessions to keep him from striking you in a rage. *Yes*, working and middle-class wages have stagnated or fallen. *Yes*, inequality has skyrocketed. *Perhaps* trade policy has gutted whole industries and communities. *Maybe* mass immigration has been more disruptive than elites anticipated (but let's not take this one too far).

All of that, however, was for the greater good and, in any case, inevitable. The elites are doing the best they can in a world that's more complex than ever. It's not fair to blame them for broad trends over which they have no control. Their decisions have lifted millions around the globe up from poverty and spread progressive ideas and practices into benighted backwaters. If, in the process, whole regions of their own countries have been impoverished, communities uprooted, traditions bulldozed—well, that couldn't be helped. Sure, they might have done things differently around the margins. But in the main, they made the right decisions, the only ones that could have been made. Who are you to judge, anyway? What's *your* credential?

There you have the general tenor.

The core purpose of these books is to rule certain topics out of bounds for legitimate debate. That is to say, to assert claims of expertise over fundamentally political questions. Nothing to vote on here, folks; move along. In this, they are simply the latest entrants in a genre: water-carrying books arguing covertly for administrative rule. Hence popular objections to, say, one-sided trade deals are dismissed and denounced as "populist" or worse—anything but democratic reactions to elite excess.

It's irritating enough to have to read inherently anti-democratic arguments in books ostensibly lamenting the rapidly approaching end of democracy (at Trump's hands, of course). The books' incoherence—or if one wishes to be less charitable, dishonesty—compounds the irritation. The authors, for obvious reasons, do not wish to admit what they are really up to. Perhaps some of them don't even quite realize it. Projecting one's own unacceptable thoughts and motives onto others is an *unconscious* coping strategy, after all, according to Dr. Freud. But the fundamental contradiction of denouncing as anti-democratic attempts to move politics in a popular direction through voting is always lurking right at the surface.

All Warts

THE WAY THE AUTHORS TRY TO SQUARE that circle is to allege a litany of Trumpian evils. No author is more relentless on this score than David Frum whose *Trumpocracy* does not pretend to be anything more than it is: an anti-Trump screed. Frum stacks the deck like a criminal prosecutor. The book reads like one of those bestsellers by conservative media superstars whom Frum no doubt despises.

I say that without rancor. I know Frum, or used to, and long respected his judgment. His past work—especially *Dead Right* (1994) and *How We Got Here* (2000)—is outstanding. He is one of the few George W. Bush Administration officials to attempt an honest reckoning with what they (we) got wrong. And, crucially, he has long been one of the few voices on the Right to speak out on the downsides of mass immigration and globalization.

The Left frets about the end of democracy when they have spent so much effort undermining it.

You'd expect him, then, to give the president *some* credit. Paint me, warts and all, Oliver Cromwell is said to have instructed his portraitist. Frum's is a portrait only of warts—mostly imagined. Where is the harsh language for all those conventional pols who not only didn't address but worsened all the problems that Frum clearly saw long ago?

There are many simple errors, too, which evince hasty composition and/or lax editing (Elaine Chao is not the Labor secretary, Keith Kellogg was never a deputy national security advisor, and press secretary Sean Spicer never stood in front of the Great Seal of the United States); and something worse, which to demonstrate requires a bit of belaboring. Frum builds his case mostly anecdotally, cherry picking news accounts and then interpreting them beyond the facts available. For example, he cites as evidence of Trump's cruelty (or of some vice, it's not clear which) the fact that Spicer, a Catholic, was not in the delegation that accompanied the First Couple to the Vatican. The fact that two other Communi-

cations staffers, Hope Hicks and Dan Scavino, were there compounds the insult. Yet Frum neglects to mention (or perhaps does not know) that they too are Catholic, which would seem to undermine his purpose for the anecdote. In fact, as in all visits to foreign capitals, the delegation size was pre-negotiated and kept small at the request of the Holy See. Members were determined mostly by seniority. Despite being quite senior, Spicer just missed the cut. He was disappointed but not insulted, understanding that such is the nature of presidential travel.

Frum, a former White House aide, ought to understand this, too. Either he does not, in which case more reporting was necessary to make this a better book, or he does, which would illustrate the tendentious nature of the whole enterprise. I dwell on this seemingly minor point to make a larger one. In every instance where Frum treats an event with which I am directly familiar (there are at least a dozen), he gets it wrong—always and only in one direction: to paint Trump in the worst possible light.

Frum is no more convincing on his litany of larger crimes. A chapter rather grandiosely entitled "Plunder" establishes no such thing but merely strings together vague, unconnected insinuations. He asserts that "a President beholden to Russia had been installed in the Oval Office: the most successful foreign espionage attempt against the United States in the nation's history" but offers no more or better evidence for this absurd charge than does special counsel Robert Mueller. It is fundamentally unserious to cite, as Frum does, \$100,000 spent on Facebook ads or even \$400,000 per month for a Russian troll farm, considering that Hillary Clinton's campaign alone spent \$768 million on her failed bid for the White House.

The book doesn't improve when he turns to analysis. Like the authors of all the other titles, he is horrified by Poland's recent nationalistic turn. He blasts the Polish president for standing up for Trump, and Trump for standing up for him. Yet Frum—also like all the other authors—is unabashedly pro-NATO. He does not pause to consider why it is that a "Russia-compromised president of the United States" would stand up in support of Poland against its ancient archenemy, which happens to be led by Trump's alleged handler, Vladimir Putin. His method is simply to cram as many anti-Trump points between two covers as he can, and assume that readers won't notice or care about the contradictions. Given who I suspect is buying this book, he's probably right.

Our Tech Overlords

THE TITLES, THESES, AND THEMES OF three and a third of these books are all so similar that they may as well be the same book—like those unfortunate Hollywood movies treating the same historical event or public domain text, all being produced at the same time.

I say “a third” in deference to David Runciman, a Cambridge politics professor who gives three reasons for *How Democracy Ends*: coups, catastrophes, and technological takeover. Runciman mostly vents his anti-Trump spleen in the first part, which is more or less of a piece with the other books. After that, his book improves considerably. Part two is an unacknowledged (or unwitting) restatement of the classical teaching on “periodic cataclysms,” as Leo Strauss called them, though not therefore uninteresting. Part three explores another classical theme, “the danger that man’s inventions might become his masters and his destroyers” (again borrowing Strauss’s phrasing here). In other words, the danger is not to democracy but to man himself. Because most on the center-Left are uncritical admirers of high-tech, it’s refreshing to read Runciman’s fears. Yet those fears

both go too far and not far enough. Runciman gives a little too much credit to our tech overlords’ good intentions. I agree with him that their intentions for their *inventions* are (mostly) good. But their intentions for themselves and their companies are very, very bad—Nietzschean, you might say. Listening to a tech oligarch discuss his and his (few) peers’ place in the coming order can tempt one to reevaluate the Jacobins.

But nature will have her say—through cataclysm if nothing else—and despite centuries of attempted conquest, she still outguns us and, I expect, always will. The natural currents of politics will go on, not perhaps exactly as before, but similar in the main. Runciman gives Big Tech too much credit as an unstoppable force, in part because he is the only one among these writers whose work doesn’t presuppose that democracy is the best—the only just—regime. He senses that democracy is dying, wants something decent to come next, and hopes that tech—properly tamed—can help provide it. His book is thus less an alarm bell than a plea.

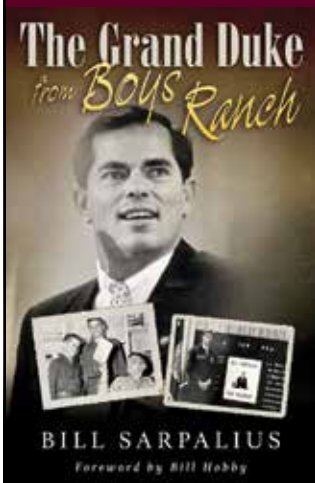
Whereas the main purpose of the others is not to explain how democracies die but to blame the Right for killing democracy. Except we know how democracy ends, and that’s not

how. Classical political philosophy and the example of history teach that all regimes, if allowed to continue their natural course—that is, absent cataclysm or conquest—are felled by the inevitable radicalization of their core principle.

Democracy, then, falls when its core principles of liberty and equality are perverted into license and levelling. Is that not a far more apt description of the decline of the West than any tired assertion that we are headed back to the 1930s? And which side of the political spectrum has aided and abetted ever-increasing license and levelling?

Here it’s necessary to note another bit of endemic confusion in these books. They can’t seem to decide if the essence of “democracy” is unmediated popular rule, as it was for the ancients, or the appendages attached in modern times to make democracy “liberal,” such as the protection of minority rights. The American Founders are by turns blamed for being anti-democratic and praised for being farsighted in understanding that democracy requires “guardrails.” Unmediated popular rule is apparently good when it overcomes constitutional barriers erected to serve the class interests of the squirearchy, but bad when attributed to Donald Trump.

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Foreword by Bill Hobby

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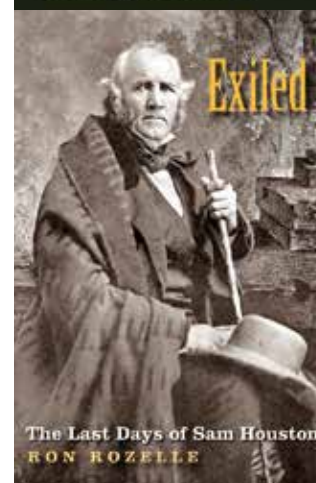
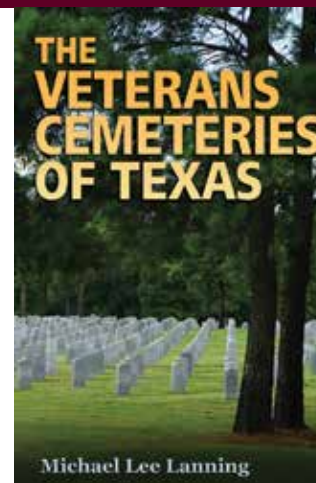
“Michael Lee Lanning brings us a unique and compelling history, thoughtful and appropriately reverent. The appendix on eligibility, policies, and regulations are particularly invaluable for any Texas veteran.”—Colonel (Ret.) Thomas T. Smith, author of *The Old Army in Texas: A Research Guide to the US Army in Nineteenth-Century Texas and The US Army and the Texas Frontier Economy, 1845–1900*

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Apples and Oranges

THE PROBLEMS WITH THESE VOLUMES compound apace. What the authors profess to be most worried about is one-man rule. Many of the examples they provide are technically accurate but inapt. Coups in countries that have never experienced stable republican rule—even if the transition is nominally from “democracy” to tyranny—hardly presage the looming death of the American regime. It’s just farcical to compare, say, Peru or the Philippines to the United States on this score. The vast majority of examples are of this ilk. The implicit equation of weak democracies with stable republics is made, it seems, simply to provide the authors with a wider sample size, the better to denounce President Trump. Contemporary political science is all about methodology. If your sample size is too small, your conclusion might not pass peer review!

How the average modern democracy ends is, after all, not a particularly urgent or difficult question. Modern Third World democracies are essentially no different from the classical meaning of “democracy”: rule of the demos, the poor. Hence they still tend to die exactly as the classics said they would. The important

question for us is: how might Western representative republicanism end?

France, which has endured more tumult than any other First World nation—including a near-death experience only 50 years ago—would have been a fruitful topic for sustained historical examination. But, apart from Runciman’s brief treatment of the Algeria crisis that brought Charles de Gaulle back to power after a 12-year absence, none is provided. There is plenty of criticism for contemporary France, whose populist rumblings and increasing skepticism of further immigration Mounk, especially, finds intolerable.

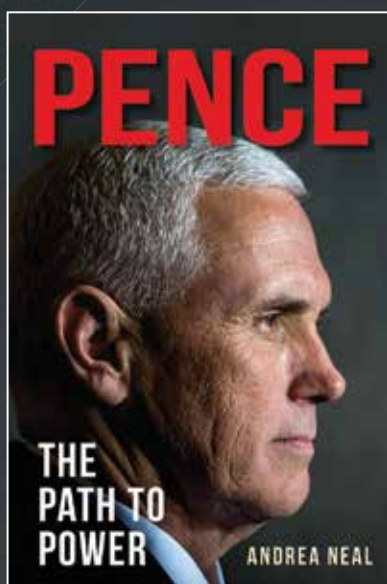
All the authors express pointed disdain for present-day Poland and Hungary. Every deviation from supposed Western democratic norms is taken to be inexcusable backsliding. But isn’t it more plausible to see these countries as standing up for their peoples, cultures, and traditions in the face of meddling by undemocratic busybodies who don’t have their best interests at heart, but rather seek to homogenize them into a globalized mass ruled centrally from afar? Hungary in particular is standing up not just for Hungary but for the supposed notion that the European Union is a union of Europeans, whose common border Hungary wishes to defend not just for itself but for the

whole union. For this affront, Hungary is castigated by Brussels, by elite opinion throughout Europe, and by our authors.

Mounk in particular holds “multiethnic democracy” to be the highest good:

The promise of multiethnic democracy, in which members of any creed or color are regarded as true equals, is nonnegotiable. Difficult though it may be for countries with a deeply monoethnic conception of themselves to embrace newcomers and minorities, such a transformation is the only realistic alternative to tyranny and civil strife.

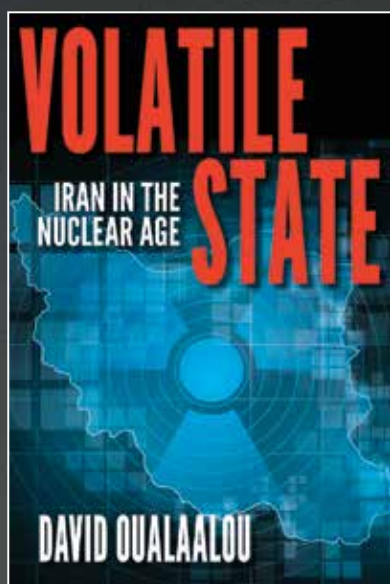
Really? The “only” realistic alternative? How about rational immigration policies that put the interest of existing citizens first? The demands of “multiethnic democracy” may be “nonnegotiable” in countries that are already multiethnic. These ukases do not in any way require the ongoing “diversification” of nations against their peoples’ wishes. Yet this latter view is so baked into current elite thinking, it never even occurs to Mounk or anyone else to make a case for it. Nor does the inherently anti-democratic nature of the demand—diversify whether you like it or not—stop to



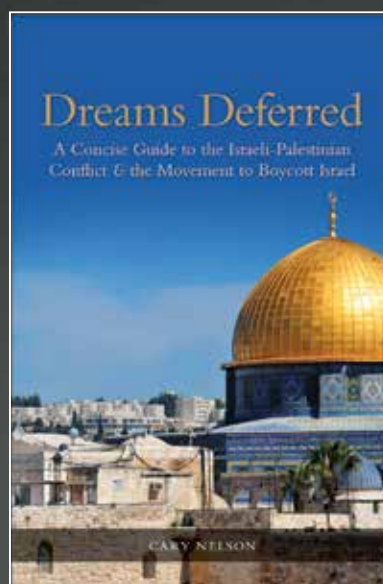
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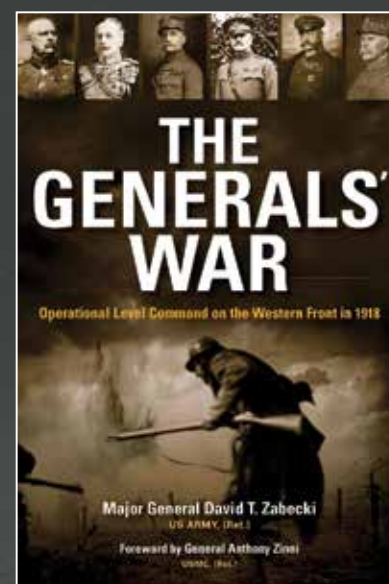


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make him question his thesis. If Poland and Hungary were to turn away from democracy now, which is the authors' great fear, would it be so easy to blame them, considering that—according to democracy's professional partisans—democracy requires that they sacrifice their nationhood?

Freedom without Freedom

THE MOST CERTAIN WAY A ONCE-STABLE republic gives way to tyranny is when the republican spirit of its people is eliminated or undermined. All such regimes decisively depend for their success and longevity on a foundation of virtue in the people. How's that going in our time? None of these books has anything at all to say about the family, the bedrock of representative republicanism. Only Mounk treats religion at any length, and then mainly to lambaste figures and societies to his right for being insufficiently deferential to Islam. Nor do these writers even mention the government-driven erosion of Alexis de Tocqueville's "mediating institutions," another bedrock of American democracy. All of these goods—and more—have been under persistent left-wing attack for at least two generations. The health of democracy seems not to have improved during that period. The connection seems obvious enough but these authors glide right past.

In any event, it's rich to read the Left fret about the end of "democracy" when they have spent so much conscious effort undermining its necessary preconditions. They have done so, I think, for two reasons. First, they long ago came to equate liberty with license. Philosophically, once nature was discarded as the standard by which to guide and judge human life, the satisfaction of appetites became the only conceivable end. Hence in matters of personal morality, the contemporary Left is a curious combination of libertine and censor. Any physical—especially sexual or pharmaceutical—act that does not draw blood or pick a pocket is permitted. There are no mores that are simply necessary to society or to personal well-being. If you're not directly harming someone else, then no one has any business even passing judgment on what you do. But you deserve to be crushed for thinking or saying the wrong thing—especially for passing judgment! Witness the recent massive freak-out over Penn Law professor Amy Wax's praise of the once-commonplace concept of "bourgeois norms." How dare she!

The second is that the Left has internalized, mostly without realizing it, the classical case that the only truly legitimate regime

is the rule of the wise. For them, it comes dressed up in its modern guise as Hegelian historicism, but either way, it's ironic that in today's cisgender Euro-bashing fiesta, their whole political philosophy rests on two quintessentially dead white male arguments. But, hey—they believe *they* are the wise. Not those dumb rednecks. When the pieces start to fit together in your mind, you begin to realize why the modern Left wants to make America more like those South American countries with a pale upper class, a darker lower class—and no middle of any shade. Because they get to be in charge. Up-pity low-income, middling-I.Q. whites are troublemakers. They think they deserve a say. Trump gives those nettlesome, red-hat-wearing proles a voice. What else do you need to know to grasp that Trump is bad?

The greatest factor in hastening the end of American-style democracy over the past 125 years (at least) has been increasing government centralization and administrative rule. To answer the question posed by Harvard Law professor Cass Sunstein's edited volume: it already did happen here! The project all along has been, and still is, to end politics. That is, to foreclose as illegitimate public debate and disagreement on issues allegedly settled by science and administered via expertise. As our personal freedom to abuse our bodies, sate our appetites, and neglect our duties ever expands, our actual freedom to govern ourselves and determine our collective future radically contracts. The people writing these ostensible democratic laments are all in the intellectual lineage of those who brought us to this point. Their aim is to complete the project. Trump's aim—however inchoate or implicit—is to reverse it. Who's the real anti-democrat?

One Encouraging Exception

MOST OF THE ABOVE DOES NOT APPLY to the one honorable exception amidst this dismal crop. William Galston's *Anti-Pluralism* is encouraging. Not because I agree with all of it. But because if liberals were more like the Brookings Institution senior fellow and former deputy assistant to President Bill Clinton, our predicament would be much less dire.

First, because Galston's theoretical grasp of where we are and how we got here is much sounder than all the others' combined. (Though not flawless. There's a little too much rote-Straussian "modernity is low" and over-emphasis on the tension between liberty and equality. But this does not negate the book's

many strengths.) Second, because his acknowledgment that the concerns of Trump voters and of globalization's "losers" are legitimate and deserve a political response appears to be sincere. Third, because his proposed solutions actually address the serious problems of our time, the very problems that the anti-Trump "conservatives"—no less, and perhaps more than, the Left—have ignored, denied, and exacerbated. Galston even has moderate, sensible things to say about immigration and the culture. Needless to say, he doesn't go nearly as far as I think we need to go. But at least one can discuss the issues with him and find common ground.

Galston's economic program marries traditional liberal concerns—wealth concentration, capital outstripping labor—with conservative causes, such as boosting growth, in hopes of sharing gains more broadly. He has some specific solutions for how to achieve this, which are sensible, though many of his stated ends are not linked to specific means. He doesn't say how, for instance, to re-link productivity gains to wage increases. I don't know how to do it either, but I agree with him that we need to find a way. It would have been charitable of Galston to have given Trump a little more credit for breaking with Republican orthodoxy and moving to the center on these and other issues. Indeed, one of the great ironies is that Donald Trump is in many respects the most liberal Republican president in generations, yet the one most often compared to Hitler. But that says less about Trump than it does about the modern Left, to which everything and everyone even a millimeter to their right is "literally Hitler." Galston's book is entirely free of this tiresome malevolence and that alone is a welcome relief.

Alas, we have no choice but to deal with the Left we have, of which Galston is sadly unrepresentative. Their project, plainly, is to replace democracy with a kind of administrative tyranny of wealth and expertise. All the hollering about Trump is in part to deflect attention and partly to sound the alarm for their side that the project is threatened.

All men of goodwill—whatever their political persuasion—should endeavor to defeat that project, which has all along been the real threat to our republic. The alternative is to reduce politics to one final question which, when answered, will answer all the others: who—from whose side—gets to be Caesar?

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