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Narrow Liberalism and Defining Democracy

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Note: The first page of Justin Taylor’s “Narrow Liberalism and Defining Democracy” is missing from the published text on file in the University Archives.
role of participation in the pursuit of individual rights.

Liberalism and democratic theory in general depend on the three
fundamental pillars of self-government for their foundation: individual
freedom, public regulation, and civic meaning. Liberalism in the last 60
years has focused on the first of those pillars, using the second as a
crutch, at the expense of the third. This is not a new observation; many
authors have identified in different ways the tension liberalism has
produced in modern democracy. Lowi’s analysis of the “second
republic,” in American history and the explosion of bureaucracy explores
the far-reaching effects of a liberalism narrowed to a focus on regulative
bureaucracy (Lowi, 1992). He argues that modern liberalism reliance on
a national bureaucracy has created a new kind of democracy with policy­
makers more insulated from the will of the people. Lowi’s “interest group
Liberalism” took the path of least resistance – it increased individual
freedoms through regulative bureaucracy instead of engendering change
in the hearts and minds of the citizenry.

As Holmes argued in his work, Passions and Constraints, original
liberal democratic theory had a heavy dose of positive constitutionalism.
Constitutions, as early liberals envisioned, not only limit government
power to ensure individual freedom but also establish structures that, “can
ensure that the will of the people is formed through open public debate . . .
. can enhance the intelligence and legitimacy of decisions made”
(Holmes, 1989:8). According to Holmes, original liberalism both assumes
and requires the engendering of participation and active individual
engagement to counter regulatory power. In the end Holmes states that,
“liberalism is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for some
measure of democracy in any modern state” (Holmes, 1989:9). What he
suggests is a co-existence, liberalism allows for and assumes republican
concepts and participation.

James Morone, in his work The Democratic Wish, identifies the
“dread and yearning” of the American people (Morone, 1991). The
dread of government, stems from “the perception that public power
threatens civic liberty” (Morone, 1991:2). The conflicting yearnings of
the American people is the democratic wish. Key to the democratic
wish, “is an image of the people—a single, united, political entity with the
capacity, as John Adams put it, to ‘think, feel, reason, and act’” (Morone,
1991:5). The American people have always assumed and strove for
active participation according to Morone. The American ideology, as he
terms it, is based on self-government, meaning active popular participation
to prevent government action without the consent of the people.

However, a stronger yearning, individualism, has allowed the American
people to be deluded into thinking the expansion of the state is
own will and is actually protecting their desires. Morone’s portrait of democracy’s development is disheartening conclusion.

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Democratic theory in general depend on the three pillars of government for their foundation: individual liberty, civic meaning, and civic meaning. Liberalism in the last 60 years has found its foundation in these three pillars, using the second as a basis for the third. This is not a new observation; many different ways the tension liberalism has

aced in his work, Passions and Constraints, original liberalism had a heavy dose of positive constitutionalism. Liberals envisioned, not only limit government control over individual freedom but also establish structures that, “can be created through open public debate ... ensure and legitimacy of decisions made”

According to Holmes, original liberalism both assumes the right of participation and active individual regulatory power. In the end Holmes states that, “freedom though not sufficient, condition for some in any modern state” (Holmes, 1989:9). What he claims is that, liberalism allows for and assumes republican yearning.

In his work The Democratic Wish, identifies the American people (Morone, 1991). The yearnings from “the perception that public power (Morone, 1991:2). The conflicting yearnings of the democratic wish. Key to the democratic people—a single, united, political entity with the purpose of being able to think, feel, reason, and act” (Morone, 1991:2). The American ideology, as he government, meaning active popular participation without the consent of the people. American individualism, has allowed the American people to be deluded into thinking the expansion of government is their own will and is actually protecting their desire to ensure self-government. Morone’s portrait of democracy’s development in America ends in a disheartening conclusion.

The state and its bureaucracy grew; however, they never won a legitimate role at the center of our society. Instead, two centuries of state building produced a string of metaphorical legitimizers for public administration: a mirror of the people (as the revolutionaries fancied their assemblies), a reflection of the people’s choices (Jacksonians), the computation of disinterested science (Progressives), the outcome of the pluralistic political market (some New Dealers). Each formula was an effort to rest administrative authority on an external, automatically functioning source of legitimacy. Each was a different escape from the same threat—public officials who make independent judgements, ministers who think.

(Morone, 1991:323)

Morone argues that a republican yearning has existed throughout our history but that the yearning to be unencumbered has prevailed in shaping our democracy. I would argue that while to limited degrees this may be the case, in earlier periods this was simply the logical balancing of republican participatory ideals and individual freedoms. Only in the twentieth century has this delusion that regulation and bureaucracy can be an effective substitute for participation become hegemonic.

Michael Sandel’s analysis of the American public philosophy supports the above assertion. In his work, Democracy’s Discontent, he defines the modern manifestation of liberalism as one that, “asserts the priority of fair procedures over particular ends, the public life it informs might be call the procedural republic” (Sandel, 1996:4). Several key points and ideas are argued from this definition. The first is that, “freedom consists in the capacity of persons to choose their values and ends.” (Sandel, 1996:5). Sandel terms this the priority of the right over the good. This means that our right to choose our own good trumps any controlling collective good. There is no common conception of the good life. Virtue comes in allowing citizens to choose their own ends. The second major point to be made from Sandel’s definition is the implied neutrality of the state. In his procedural republic, the state does not perform any formative function. Lowi’s second republic, Holmes’s negative constitutionalism, and Morone’s self-delusion are different conceptions of very similar arguments. The explosion of bureaucracy has

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insulated the people from their government and de-emphasized civic participation.

An essential flaw of Sandel and other critics of liberalism is their juxtaposition of liberalism to republicanism. Republicanism is not in opposition to liberalism. As some have suggested, these two public philosophies combine and rely on each other to maintain self-government. Richard Dagger, for example, argues that, "just as a liberal society must be able to count on a sense of community and civic engagement, so the republican polity that Sandel now champions must be able to count on a commitment to liberal principles, such as tolerance, fair play, and respect for others" (Dagger, 1998:4). Democracy relies on both philosophies for development and, in very practical ways, regime support. Without both sides of the equation democracy can be undercut. Narrow liberalism has de-emphasized but not destroyed republicanism. A resurgence of republicanism should not attempt to discredit a commitment to a broader liberal theory.

"Central to republican theory is the idea that liberty depends on sharing in self-government ... sharing in self-rule involves ... deliberating with fellow citizens about the common good and helping to the destiny of the political community" (Sandel, 1996:5). Sandel misunderstood the implications of his own definition of republicanism. This definition does not demand a communitarian model, where communal good supercedes all notions of individual rights. Neither does this definition demand republicanism be set in opposition to liberalism. As Richard Dagger points out in his critique of Sandel, "we should pause to consider whether republicanism and liberalism share enough features to make a hybrid possible - perhaps in the form of a 'more civic-minded liberalism' that might be called republican liberalism" (Dagger, 1998:26). While Dagger seeks to find a hybrid, I contend the relationship should be conceptualized more as a necessary co-existence. There are distinct schools of democratic thought and they cannot be combined into one overarching theory. Yet in the practical application of democracy on a society, each requires the other for foundations and support. On the one hand, liberalism relies on republican virtue and self-government to create the type of citizens required for self-government; this in turn is the vehicle for individual freedom and liberties. On the other hand, republicanism relies on liberalism’s commitment to tolerance, freedom and fairness to create a just society. Both are necessary but not sufficient for democracy’s development.

Narrow liberalism does not allow for what Sandel terms “a formative politics.” However, original liberalism accepted and relied on the republican idea of a non-neutral state. He argued that constitutionalism not only allows for but requires a government capable and inclined to participate and debate. A. original liberalism with its narrow implementation, "The republican conception of freedom, unlike the liberal conception, require a formative politics, a politics that cultivates the qualities of character self-government requires. Republicanism does envision a formative politics, one that tends to the virtues of citizenship required for a just and free society." The challenge is to develop new ways to engage without coercion under our new understanding of democracy. Not as Sandel states that, “the liberal vision of resources to sustain self-government,” but the implementation of narrow liberalism lacks the necessary mechanisms.

As opposed to the original, wide-reaching liberal thought, the liberalism that has dominated the century produced a society and a government focused on the area. The focus on individual, private freedom for the citizens of this country but at what cost? Democracy is the civic ideal. Narrow liberalism’s importance of civic culture and instead has relied on regulation to maintain a government truly for the citizens. Narrow liberalism has used procedural mechanisms to protect individual rights as well as the public good. The challenge is to develop new ways to engage without coercion under our new understanding of democracy. Not as Sandel states that, “the liberal vision of resources to sustain self-government,” but the implementation of narrow liberalism lacks the necessary mechanisms.

Self-government on auto-pilot is the liberal theory. The reliance on regulative burden can be concerned only with their own private, usual and undermine the crucial function of civic politics that emphasizes civic meaning and inter-dependence. It is our society’s advance toward a more just and more inclusive one that we are to understand where democracy stands and what full definition of democracy is required.

What is Democracy?

Democracy has been stated simply and unmistakably. Abraham Lincoln’s oft-quoted phrase, "government of the people, by the people, for the people" is a succinct summary of the democratic ideal. Democracy requires active participation by citizens in the decision-making process of their government. It emphasizes the importance of individual rights and liberties, as well as the collective good. A democratic society values freedom of speech, equality before the law, and the right to vote. It fosters an open and transparent government that is accountable to the people. Democracy ensures that political power is not concentrated in the hands of a few but is distributed among the many. It promotes social justice and equality, recognizing that the common good is best served when all members of society have equal opportunity to participate and contribute.
Sandel and other critics of liberalism is their republicanism. Republicanism is not in some have suggested, these two public only on each other to maintain self-government. e, argues that, “just as a liberal society must of community and civic engagement, so the now champions must be able to count on a ipes, such as tolerance, fair play, and respect .) Democracy relies on both philosophies for actual ways, regime support. Without both racy can be undercut. Narrow liberalism has oyed republicanism. A resurgence of tempt to discredit a commitment to a broader an theory is the idea that liberty depends on . . . sharing in self-rule involves . . . zens about the common good and helping to community” (Sandel, 1996:5). Sandel ons of his own definition of republicanism. and a communitarian model, where all notions of individual rights. Neither does licanism be set in opposition to liberalism. As his critique of Sandel, “we should pause to islandism and liberalism share enough features to rhaps in the form of a “more civic-minded led republican liberalism” (Dagger, 1998:26). a hybrid, I contend the relationship should be ecessary co-existence. There are distinct ght and they cannot be combined into one the practical application of democracy on a ther for foundations and support. On the one publican virtue and self-government to create for self-government; this in turn is the vehicle iterties. On the other hand, republicanism itment to tolerance, freedom and fairness to are necessary but not sufficient for does not allow for what Sandel terms “a er, original liberalism accepted and relied on the republican idea of a non-neutral state. Holmes’ argument for positive constitutionalism not only allows for but requires the cultivation of citizens able and inclined to participate and debate. Again, Sandel confuses original liberalism with its narrow implementation of the twentieth century. “The republican conception of freedom, unlike the liberal conception, require a formative politics, a politics that cultivates in citizens the qualities of character self-government requires,” (Sandel, 1996:6). Republicanism does envision a formative project. The cultivation of civic-minded individuals is essential to self-government and therefore the protection of individual rights as well as the pursuit of the common good. The challenge is to develop new ways to engender this type of citizenry without coercion under our new understandings of individual rights. It is not as Sandel states that, “the liberal vision of freedom lacks the civic resources to sustain self-government,” but that the practical implementation of narrow liberalism lacks the necessary institutional mechanisms.

As opposed to the original, wide-reaching ideals found in liberal thought, the liberalism that has dominated the twentieth century has produced a society and a government focused on achievement in only one area. The focus on individual, private freedom has achieved great strides for the citizens of this country but at what cost? An essential piece of democracy is the civic ideal. Narrow liberalism has neglected the importance of civic culture and instead has relied solely on procedural regulation to maintain a government truly for the people. In the end, narrow liberalism has used procedural mechanisms to expand individual freedom while assuming that those mechanisms they have created will keep government in check and lessen the need for civic engagement.

Self-government on auto-pilot is the order of the day for modern liberal theory. The reliance on regulative bureaucracy allows citizens to be concerned only with their own private, usually economic, well-being and undermine the crucial function of civic participation. The total de-emphasis of civic meaning and inter-dependence will not lead to a total destruction of democracy and free will. It will, however, prevent society’s advance toward a more just and morally virtuous society. If we are to understand where democracy stands and where it needs to go, a full definition of democracy is required.

What is Democracy?

Democracy has been stated simply and in seemingly unmistakable terms. Abraham Lincoln’s oft quoted assertion, “government of the people, by the people, and for the people,” seems to

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suggest what any fourth grader would tell you. Democracy is simply free government, based on the sovereignty of the people, advancing the will of the people. This type of government can be easily distinguished from non-democratic forms. Clear and unmistakable characteristics define a democracy. But this only describes democracy at the surface. These surface characteristics are important and necessary to democracy’s foundation but they are not sufficient for its maintenance or development. In fact, the four surface characteristics are termed such because they are only products of the first two pillars of democracy: individual freedom and public regulation. A democracy based only on two legs cannot stand. The third pillar of democracy, civic meaning, produces more subtle characteristics of democracy, which I term foundational characteristics.

Surface Characteristics

The first and most readily measured surface characteristic is structural mechanisms designed to ensure representation, such as free and open elections. To be a truly democratic influence on policy-makers, elections must be structured to ensure a wide definition of those who are qualified to vote. This is for legitimacy and to ensure that representative government is just that — representative. The great success of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was that it widened the definition of democracy. But even with this seemingly clear characteristic, some distinctions and explanations must be made. An understanding is needed of exactly what is meant and what the intended results of elections. Democratic theorists have debated two elements or conceptions of role of elections. I will present these as the idealist version and the realist version of elections. Joseph Schumpeter articulates the realist position, “the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote” (Schumpeter, 1997:366). Elections simply serve as a check on those in power. But only in so far as to allow “the people” to choose which set of elites will govern. According to Schumpeter, the idealist position ignores the essential and natural selection of leaders. True government by the people is unattainable and impractical. Democratic theory is moving toward this new realization, Schumpeter argues. The idealists contend that free and open elections are part of the essential process of debate and discussion. Elections are not designed to give the populous direct control over policy; they are principally designed to translate the doctrine of popular sovereignty into an operating principle or institutional practice (Mayo, 1997:192). Elections are obvious and essential points in the process of self-government by which “the people’s” will and I count my self as one – elections not only “throwing the bums out,” but also legitimate that, between elections, those in power listed by it or face the same fate as those they reject the role and effectiveness of public discourse.

Another surface characteristic of democracy, both political and individual. People are able to choose freely a representative body make their own decision without coercion or force. The process is the existence of formal procedures: freedom to run for office, freedom of press and organization for political purposes (Mayo, 1997:372). A government’s commitment to democracy, former Soviet Union, Communist China, an Mexico display all the trappings of democracy only skin deep. The lack of any viable opposition elections results sweep away any claim to democracy’s effectiveness and stability is a maintenance of individual freedoms. Rights to education, and economic self-determination are demanded. The protection of individual rights popular support for the regime and a sense of protect each citizen. This understanding of Wilson defines as compliance ideologies— decided on by society, ensured by the government to stabilize the current political structure (Wilson, 1997:366). Commitment to political and social traditions of modern democracy. This distills concerning freedoms. Political equality age and outcomes. For political equality to be achieved, each vote shall count equally: elected shall be proportional to the number of voters. Political equality again ensures legitimacy a sovereignty into structural outcomes. Social policy outcomes but is achieved through this process. This implies another problem with narrow measure success or progress in procedural attitudes and norms. The belief is that government change through regulation. Whi
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Another surface characteristic of democracy is a commitment to freedoms, both political and individual. Political freedom refers to the ability to choose freely a representative body. Voters must be allowed to make their own decision without coercion or intimidation. Essential to this process is the existence of formal procedural rules such as secret ballot, freedom to run for office, freedom of press and speech, and assembly and organization for political purposes (Mayo 1997:374). The legitimate operation and inclusion of opposition parties and opinions is a measure of a government’s commitment to democracy. Governments such as the former Soviet Union, Communist China, and the hegemonic PRI in Mexico display all the trappings of democratic elections, but these are only skin deep. The lack of any viable opposition and preordained elections results sweep away any claim to democracy. Fundamental to democracy’s effectiveness and stability is a commitment and maintenance of individual freedoms. Rights of privacy, religion, basic education, and economic self-determination are just some of the rights demanded. The protection of individual rights maintains and engenders popular support for the regime and a sense of government working to protect each citizen. This understanding of rights is part of what Richard Wilson defines as compliance ideologies — those standards and norms, decided on by society, ensured by the government, which protect and stabilize the current political structure (Wilson, 1992).

Commitment to political and social equality is also a necessary trademark of modern democracy. This distinction parallels the above concerning freedoms. Political equality again refers to electoral structure and outcomes. For political equality to be achieved, each citizen shall have one vote, each vote shall count equally and the representatives elected shall be proportional to the number of equal votes (Mayo, 1997). Political equality again ensures legitimacy and translates popular sovereignty into structural outcomes. Social equality is measured through the policy outcomes but is achieved through wide popular consensus. This implies another problem with narrow liberalism. Modern liberals measure success or progress in procedural reforms and not societal attitudes and norms. The belief is that government can produce mass attitudinal change through regulation. While this does happen to a limited
degree, social attitudes are altered one person at time and not by centralized regulation. Nevertheless, at this juncture it is important only to note that modern democracy must display a commitment both to political equality and to social equality.

Majoritarianism is the fourth surface characteristic and presents an internal tension, which must also be addressed in any attempt to define democratic structure. Democracy’s claim to representation is seemingly at odds with the notions of majority rule. That is to say if the majority will prevails those in the minority are not represented in policy. As Schumpeter put it, “the will of the majority is the will of the majority and not the will of ‘the people,’” (Schumpeter, 1997:368). But this does not necessarily exclude the claim of government “by the people.” As MacIver, Mayo, Lindsay and others have argued democracy is not a form of policy development; it is a system to determine who governs and to what ends (Cohen, 1997). Many consider majoritarian aspects of democracy beneficial and stabilizing when counter-balanced with a society-wide commitment to minority rights. The very fact that when universal consensus cannot be achieved, which is almost always the case, the majority prevails only ensures democracy’s survival and continued mass support of the government structure. It is important to note that this is not a carte blanche for Tocqueville’s feared “tyranny of the majority.” This, in the end, benefits all in the society by maintaining its egalitarian aspects and structural opportunities for minorities while maintaining stability and long-term support. Now that we have an understanding of the surface characteristics of democracy, a discussion of the foundational characteristics — those necessary for the maintenance and future development of the third pillar of democracy, civic meaning — is needed.

Foundational Characteristics

Democratic theorists have been struggling for centuries with the notions of participation and community ends. Both of which I claim to be the essential underpinnings of democracy and its future progress. For democracy to make the virtuous claim of self-government, there must be continuous input and oversight by “the people.” This is a very different claim than modern liberal theorists have pragmatically put into practice. Narrow liberalism’s tunnel vision toward an expansion of individual rights and liberties have forced it to use regulation and interest group pressure in place of true community participation. Democracy cannot stand on interest groups and regulation alone so that individuals may spend all of their efforts toward their own ends. In order to develop and advance to a more virtuous kind of democracy, the expansions in individual rights and procedural regulation must be matched in kind, understanding of civic meaning and new ways project of cultivating citizens capable of self-governance, the basic fact that liberal policy of the last fifty years undermined.

At this juncture, a brief return to representation is in order. The argument to be made for a newly found emphasis on representation begs the question of what exactly is participation that translated into policy. At a most basic level, representation is a form of voting. But, as stated previously, this does not necessarily exclude the claim of government “by the people.” While it might be logically posited, it cannot be that the modern world.

As suggested by several authors, the argument to be made for a newly found emphasis on representation means the opportunity and ability to engage in debate and discussion, and the right to representation both in the assemblies and in the policy-making process. As MacIver, Mayo, Lindsay and others have argued, democracy is not a form of policy development; it is a system to determine who governs and to what ends (Cohen, 1997). Many consider majoritarian aspects of democracy beneficial and stabilizing when counter-balanced with a society-wide commitment to minority rights. The very fact that when universal consensus cannot be achieved, which is almost always the case, the majority prevails only ensures democracy’s survival and continued mass support of the government structure. It is important to note that this is not a carte blanche for Tocqueville’s feared “tyranny of the majority.” This, in the end, benefits all in the society by maintaining its egalitarian aspects and structural opportunities for minorities while maintaining stability and long-term support. Now that we have an understanding of the surface characteristics of democracy, a discussion of the foundational characteristics — those necessary for the maintenance and future development of the third pillar of democracy, civic meaning — is needed.
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undermined.

At this juncture, a brief return to representation is necessary.
The argument to be made for a newly found emphasis on participation
begs the question of what exactly is participation and how effectively is
that translated into policy. At a most basic level, participation is simply
voting. But, as stated previously, this does not ensure the designed
representation both in the assemblies and in the policy outputs. Some
would argue that to be truly virtuous participation must have a direct
effect on policy. Otherwise, it has been diluted in its power and “the
people” are a little less self-governed. While in a utopian setting this
argument might be logically posited, it cannot be a serious consideration in
the modern world.

As suggested by several authors, the Athenian model and
universal assent can no longer define participation. Participation now
means the opportunity and ability to engage in debate. Each member of a
society must undertake the absolute necessity of discussing the issues of
the day. As Lindsay argued, “what matters is not that the final decision
of government should be assented to by every one, but that every one
should have somehow made his contribution to that decision” (Lindsay,
1997:362-3). It is the responsibility of the assembly to set the agenda and
provide a calming force to the volatile winds of public opinion, but without
free and open debate assemblies can make no claim of continuous
representation. In modern society we see the unmistakable breakdown in
participation—debate, discussion, and voting—narrow liberalism has
implanted a reliance on regulative bureaucracy and interest groups to
ensure the individual rights over government encroachment. The concern
is two-fold. Under a structure reliant on procedure, regulation and
bureaucracy, how legitimate is the claim of self-rule. And, as Lindsay
points out debate should lead to responsive representative assemblies, is
this input occurring at all and, if so, is the bureaucracy listening and
responsive to individual participation. Lindsay’s pronouncement, “what
matters is not that the people should rule, but that they think they should
rule; and it has given undue emphasis to the element of consent over the
element of discussion” (Lindsay 1997:359), now seems even more
ominous in the face of a democracy purposefully put on auto-pilot in the
pursuit of individualism.

Individualism and a reliance on regulative bureaucracy alone

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cannot advance democracy and help our society develop further.
“Democracy is a kind of community government” (Cohen, 1997:357).
This simple observation has not been advanced in the narrow liberalism of
the twentieth century, yet I maintain civic meaning or community is the
second foundational underpinning of self-government. If the goal of our
society is to produce full, complete and virtuous citizens, and I believe it
is, attention must be given to the notion that we cannot act as if our lives
and actions affect no one but ourselves. It is an inescapable truth that
we, as Sandel terms it, are “encumbered.” This fact is a strength, not a
weakness. Without interpersonal contact and responsibility we cannot
become complete human beings. “The keynote of democracy as a way
of life may be expressed, it seems to me, as the necessity for the
participation of every mature human being in the formation of values
that regulate the living of men together; which is necessary from the
standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development

Two important elements can be found in the above argument.
First, it is absolutely essential “for the participation of every mature
human being.” Working with the above description of participation, the
reason for its necessity should become clear. Democracy, as do all forms
of government, establishes and enforces community norms and standards.
Without individuals engaging and participating in our government, it
cesses to be our government; we cease to be self-ruled. As Dewey
clearly argues, “all those who are affected by social institutions must have
social welfare” cannot be determined, let alone achieved, with a
completely atomistic, self-interested view of the individual. Society’s
commitment to freedom, equality, justice, and virtue requires input from
the people. The ends sought by narrow liberalism cannot be achieved
and protected without civic-minded individuals.

A brief discussion on ends versus means should be helpful to my
point. Since Hobbes, liberals have debated whether the goal of civil
society should be the development of shared ends or shared means. My
contention is that democracy requires civic individuals engaged in their
community to develop consensus on shared means to individual
development and personal definitions of success. However, in the
process we also have a shared end, the development of a virtuous society
that allows for the growth of complete human beings. John Rawls
discussed this issue in terms of concepts and conceptions. This is very
useful for the points made above. The goal of our democracy is to
achieve a consensus on the concepts of community norms. It is

References


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y and help our society develop further. Community government” (Cohen, 1997:357).

As not been advanced in the narrow liberalism of I maintain civic meaning or community is the spinning of self-government. If the goal of our complete and virtuous citizens, and I believe it to the notion that we cannot act as if our lives but ourselves. It is an inescapable truth that be “encumbered.” This fact is a strength, not a personal contact and responsibility we cannot beings. “The keynote of democracy as a way it seems to me, as the necessity for the sure human being in the formation of values that together: which is necessary from the general social welfare and the full development of al,” (Dewey, 1997:378). Elements can be found in the above argument.

Initial “for the participation of every mature with the above description of participation, the should become clear. Democracy, as do all forms and enforces community norms and standards. "Engaging and participating in our government, it rent; we cease to be self-rulled. As Dewey who are affected by social institutions must have managing them,” (Dewey, 1997:378). “General determined, let alone achieved, with a d-interested view of the individual. Society’s quality, justice, and virtue requires input from right by narrow liberalism cannot be achieved c-minded individuals. On ends versus means should be helpful to my rals have debated whether the goal of civil elopment of shared ends or shared means. My cacy requires civic individuals engaged in theirensus on shared means to individual I definitions of success. However, in the shared end, the development of a virtuous cirty of complete human beings. John Rawls ms of concepts and conceptions. This is very e above. The goal of our democracy is to he concepts of community norms. It is absolutely essential that a self-governed society actively engages in and debates those concepts continuously. This is so because each individual’s conception of those concepts of justice, freedom and equality change and develop over time. They are not static definitions; rather, as we grow and develop so must our conceptions. And when those conceptions change at the individual level, eventually a new consensus of the concepts is defined and we as a society have grown and moved toward our goal of more complete individuals.

The challenge for our democracy is to find new and inventive ways to engender and support civic-minded citizens without coercion or trampling the advances we have made in our concepts of individual rights and freedoms. “Merely legal guarantees of the civil liberties of free belief, free expression, free assembly are of little avail if in our daily life freedom of communication, the give and take of ideas, facts, experiences, is choked by mutual suspicion, by abuse, by fear and hatred. These things destroy the essential condition of the democratic way,” (Dewey, 1997:382). Democracy is not simply a structure established by our founding fathers, that we can ignore and disengage from in the pursuit of self-interested individualistic goals. The foundation of democracy relies on the need for civic engagement and development. Without it our development as complete human beings and a truly just and virtuous society are hampered. “The heart and final guarantee of democracy is in the free gatherings of neighbors on the street corner to discuss back and forth what is read in uncensored news of the day, and in the gatherings of friends in the living rooms of houses and apartments to converse freely with one another,” (Dewey, 381-382). The challenge is to find new neighborhoods, new street corners, new ways of engaging our citizens and engendering civic virtue.

References


relations in marriage. They argue contraception is in itself or in its very nature evil. Her human being is not considered intrinsically evil. hence are allowed, even in light of the fifth article not kill." This shows how serious the issue of by the Church. 
y, a large number of the clergy, theologians, and 
ps disagree with the papal doctrine. They claim 
made a mistake, and should change its outdated 
ption. They point to the condemnation of Galileo 
as one example of a mistake made by the Catholic 
istry. The dissenters from the papal ban on
consumption are inevitable, and it is the church’s 
from them. The dissenters also claim that, overall, 
take away the procreative aspect of the marital 
f it is the purpose and goal of the couple to have 
while using contraception is an experience that can 
ship. It can provide a uniting experience that brings 
at severing the procreative purpose of marriage. 
will summarize the history of doctrines regarding 
ach, and comment on the political climates
ines. I will then recount the arguments presently 
defend its position, and finally argue for a repeal 
tion. First, it is important and useful to look at the 
in the Church, and how the arguments and 
doped out of early Christian views regarding

**Teachings Regarding Contraception**

Commandment against contraception in any of the 
se are the words of John Noonan in his book Light on Contraception Throughout the 
read as the authoritative book on the subject by 
hy and laity alike. The only reference the Bible 
i is in the story of Onan. Onan is the son of Judah, 
have children with the widow of his elder brother, 
. However, Onan disobeys and practiced coitus 
withdrawal, spilling his seed on the ground. God 
. Taken literally, this can be interpreted as a 
ception. Most Biblical scholars do not take this

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