

DIVERSITY AND DISPOSITIONS

Confronting the Chaos of the New: Democracy, Difference, and Daring

ANNE NORTON*

ABSTRACT

Diversity is often thought to demand the softer practices and virtues: empathy, forbearance, patience, and tolerance.¹ The proper ethic for diversity is an ethic of courage. That ethic is allied to practices of daring, judgment and friendship that are necessary to the practice of democracy. Democracies attract people of all kinds, with varying practices and cultures. The common ground of democracy is a wild and rich diversity that is both a source of pleasure and profit and a constant and common battlefield. Democrats are called to confront the chaos of the new among their people and in their politics. Courage makes possible the inventiveness of capitalism, the surety of friendship, and the possibility of democratic rule.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. THE FEAR OF DIVERSITY	780
II. THE LIMITS OF TOLERANCE	782
III. COMMON COURAGE	785
IV. DEMOCRACY AND DIVERSITY	786
V. THE PLEASURES OF DIVERSITY	789
VI. CONTROLLING DIVERSITY	791

* Anne Norton is Stacey and Henry Jackson President's Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania. © 2018, Anne Norton.

1. Herbert Marcuse and Wendy Brown have written well and famously on the dark side of toleration. See Herbert Marcuse, *Repressive Tolerance*, in ROBERT PAUL WOLFF, BARRINGTON MOORE, JR., & HERBERT MARCUSE, *A CRITIQUE OF PURE TOLERANCE* 95–137 (1969); WENDY BROWN, *REGULATING AVERSION: TOLERANCE IN THE AGE OF IDENTITY AND EMPIRE* (2006).

I. THE FEAR OF DIVERSITY

We find ourselves in a time when diversity seems to shelter an existential threat. That threat is two-fold: fear of the unwashed, ungoverned masses, and fear of the lone wolf. The West is haunted by fears of Muslim terrorists and nativist mobs. African American parents talk to their growing boys about how to conduct oneself before the police and watch as neo-Nazis parade in Charlottesville. The threat of death at the policeman's hands animates Black Lives Matter. The European right stokes fears of an influx of refugees, alien in faith, culture, language, and ancestry. Fears of the alien immigrant drive Brexit, the *Alternative für Deutschland*, and the longing for an American border wall. Immigrants and the refugees in their millions threaten "our way of life." The terrorist threatens your life. One cannot be sure whether the bearded kid with a backpack is a medical student or a jihadi. One cannot be sure if the undocumented immigrant is a Dreamer at university, a landscaper working long hard hours, or a rapist waiting for you around the next corner. Donald Trump made that anxiety explicit: "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. . . . They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists."² "They take drugs, literally, and they throw it. A hundred pounds of drugs, they throw it over the wall. They have catapults. They throw it over the wall, and it lands and it hit somebody on the head. You don't even know they're there."³

This extends to Muslims. How many might be terrorists? Asked about Syrian refugees at a New Hampshire campaign rally he speculated: "They could be ISIS, I don't know. This could be one of the great tactical ploys of all time. A 200,000-man army, maybe," Asked if Islam is an inherently violent religion, Trump responded: "Well, all I can say . . . there's something going on. You know, there's something definitely going on. I don't know that that question can be answered." He criticized Obama for not using the term "radical Islamic terrorists" saying "[t]here's something going on with him that we don't know about."⁴

One can never be sure. It is not merely that we cannot be sure (especially in a concealed carry state) whether there are weapons in the duffel bag, whether there is a gun in the pocket of that coat. Our uncertainty is fundamental. We are alien to one another. We do not know what thoughts are sheltered in the body at the next desk. We do not know what rage fires the emotions hidden in the next seat on the subway. The struggle for a motive in the Las Vegas shootings underlines this

2. Donald Trump, *Full Text: Donald Trump Announces a Presidential Bid*, WASH. POST (June 16, 2015), https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/16/full-text-donald-trump-announces-a-presidential-bid/?utm_term=.f758e178dffc [https://perma.cc/CM26-9YFY].

3. Sophie Tatum, *'You Don't Need It All the Way' and Other Things Trump Said About 'The Wall' on Friday*, CNN (Sept. 23, 2017), <http://www.cnn.com/2017/09/22/politics/five-things-donald-trump-wall/index.html> [https://perma.cc/5BPT-FBL6].

4. Jenna Johnson & Abigail Hauslohner, *'I Think Islam Hates Us': A Timeline of Trump's Comments About Islam and Muslims*, WASH. POST (May 20, 2017), https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2017/05/20/i-think-islam-hates-us-a-timeline-of-trumps-comments-about-islam-and-muslims/?utm_term=.f6461e24b229 [https://perma.cc/9S7B-PAFG].

enduring fear. We are always close and closed to one another. Hobbes marks that fear as the threshold of politics (and the guarantor of equality). “Nature hath made men so equall” Hobbes observed, that though men differ in intellect and strength, “the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest.”⁵ Reason for fear is always present.

Trump’s perseverance on our uncertainty reminds us that fear of the other is linked to the constituent condition of democracy. The citizen, as Rousseau so elegantly phrased it, is both subject and sovereign. We are always ruled, always vulnerable to the exercise of power. We are also rulers, faced with an unruly, potentially revolutionary populace, whom we must learn to govern. Trump’s rhetoric makes perverse use of the uncertainty constitutive of our common life. “You don’t even know they’re there”—but they are there, and they are armed with catapults.⁶ “I don’t know” he says, “I don’t know that that question can be answered” but “there’s something going on. You know, there’s something definitely going on.”⁷ We know nothing, but we know we are at risk from one another. We do not know what the threat is, but we know there is a threat. The only certainty is danger.

The desire to see a particular hue, the shape of an eye or nose, as a mark of criminality offers a perverse and fictive security. The narrowed fear of a criminal class masks the threat that each person holds for every other. Fearing the black man, the Mexican, the Muslim or, in another age or place, the Irishman, the Roma, or the Jew enables the fearful one to forget or deny fear of the unmarked stranger, fear of the neighbor, fear of the family, fear of the state. Anxiety about diversity shields the fearful against a more fundamental fear of the omnipresent danger of violence.

Fear of Mexicans or Central Americans on the Southern border can be answered with a wall. Fear of Muslims can be answered with a travel ban or a Muslim registry. Focusing the fear on a class, a category, a race, a religion, or an ethnicity conceals the threat: the truth that anyone can kill. These fears, embedded in marked bodies, are generative. They issue in calls for registries, detention camps, travel restrictions, border walls, and deportations. They lead to the establishment of bank regulations, surveillance, and black sites: the entire panoply of foreign and domestic strategies in the “War on Terror.” They lead to wars. The strategies these fears generate do not allay the fears that called them forth. They direct them. The results are manifold: an increase in the power of the state; an increase in the extent and intensity of state and corporate surveillance; the establishment and enrichment of corporations engaged in the provision of security.

The directing of fears against a designated target licenses an armory of state interventions. The spectacle of Congress singing “God Bless America” veils the intrusive surveillance and aggressive governance of the “Patriot Act.” The

5. THOMAS HOBBS, *LEVIATHAN* 86–87 (Tuck ed., Cambridge University Press 1996) (1651).

6. Tatum, *supra* note 3.

7. Johnson & Hauslohner, *supra* note 4.

interventions of our own states may be more to be feared than external threats. Recall the argument made so powerfully by Charles Tilly in *War-making and State-making as Organized Crime*.⁸ States, Tilly argued, often call forth the dangers they protect us against:

To the extent that the threats against which a given government protects its citizens are imaginary or are consequences of its own activities, the government has organized a protection racket. Since governments themselves commonly simulate, stimulate, or even fabricate threats of external war and since the repressive and extractive activities of governments often constitute the largest current threats to the livelihoods of their own citizens, many governments operate in essentially the same ways as racketeers.⁹

What is required is not tolerance, it is courage. Tolerance is a gift extended by the more to the less powerful. Courage belongs as much to the powerless as the powerful—perhaps more as they have more occasion to show it. Courage can be shown in confronting the contemptible or the admirable. Tolerance retreats in the face of danger, courage holds its ground.

II. THE LIMITS OF TOLERANCE

“Diversity” is commonly understood as a racial, ethnic or religious difference. It is extended, in certain venues, to differences in sexual or ideological orientation. In all cases it speaks of the recognition of difference. We are called to tolerate not only the Latino immigrant, documented or undocumented, the African-American, the Jew, the Catholic, the Muslims, the Hindu, the evangelical Protestant, refugees from places we have intervened (and a few we have not). We are also called to tolerate conservatives if we are liberal, liberals if we are conservative. We are called to tolerate people who regard us as evil, sinful, decadent, disgusting; people who wish we did not exist. This is so ordinary to us that—even in these times—we have forgotten how remarkable it is.

One could argue that my understanding of courage as a democratic ethic is tolerance by another name. Tolerance in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was often a stance of great courage. Religious conflict had been marked not only by war, but by persecution: the burning of witches and heretics. The fury of the burning bears witness to the fear of the persecutors. Then, tolerance was reason’s refusal to be moved by fear. In our time, tolerance names a softer, even a sly, practice.

Tolerance, as Wendy Brown has observed, indicates a certain distaste. It veils aversion. One tolerates things and people one would rather not have to deal with. Tolerance, Brown argues, is inflected with disgust and contempt. Tolerance

8. Charles Tilly, *War-making and State-making as Organized Crime*, in BRINGING THE STATE BACK 169–91 (Peter Evans et al. eds., 1985).

9. *Id.* at 171.

permits, but in permitting, marks the tolerated as the unwanted, the deviant, the repellent. Tolerance includes, but it marks the tolerated as having only a conditional right to presence. Those who are tolerated have presence as the gift of the tolerant, mindful that those who give can also take away. Tolerance emerged as a practice that might foreclose the violence of religious war, it has figured in contemporary politics as a license for rejection, persecution, torture and war. Those who will not tolerate homosexuality will not be tolerated as Dutch citizens. The presence of intolerance directed at women or people of irregular sexuality was cited as a license for American interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Tolerance had betrayed itself.

This is more subtly evident in the profiteering around diversity. There are required courses on benchmarks and best practices, all embedded in surprisingly expensive consultancies and curricula.¹⁰ As Wendy Brown observes in *Undoing the Demos*, benchmarking and best practices disseminate market values and economic thinking promiscuously, replacing ends and values alien to economic thinking.¹¹ I would argue that they also replace the Burkean process of consensus building through the commonplace practices of ordinary people with a top-down, often coercive, imposition of standards and practices. These are, as Brown notes, removed from history.¹² “How an organization or firm has traditionally or recently done things is irrelevant to how it should do them and must be the first thing jettisoned.”¹³ They are also removed from context and any conception of an aim or mission. “A key premise of benchmarking is that best practices can be exported from one industry or sector to another.”¹⁴ They claim a formal neutrality belied by their imbrication in technologies that enhance the consolidation of power. The questions “best for what?” and the more pointed “best for whom?” are foreclosed.

Herbert Marcuse wrote that “what is proclaimed and practiced as tolerance today, is in many of its most effective manifestations serving the cause of oppression.”¹⁵ Tolerance, or as he qualified it, “liberating tolerance,” Marcuse argued, “is an end in itself.”¹⁶ This tolerance, properly understood, entailed “the elimination of violence, and the reduction of suppression to the extent required for protecting man and animals from cruelty and aggression.”¹⁷ That was not, however, what went by the name of tolerance. On the contrary, Marcuse protested against

10. For example, Courageous Conversation, a program of Pacific Educational Group, is aimed primarily at elementary schools. The National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity’s faculty success program requires a \$3,450 fee for individual faculty whose institutions are members (at a fee of \$20,000 a year). *The Faculty Success Program*, NAT’L CTR. FAC. DEV. & DIVERSITY, <https://www.facultydiversity.org/fsp-bootcamp> (last visited Aug. 17, 2018).

11. WENDY BROWN, *UNDOING THE DEMOS: NEOLIBERALISM’S STEALTH REVOLUTION* 135–50 (2015).

12. *Id.* at 136–37.

13. *Id.* at 136.

14. *Id.* at 137.

15. Herbert Marcuse, *Repressive Tolerance*, in *A CRITIQUE OF PURE TOLERANCE* 81 (1969).

16. *Id.* at 81–82.

17. *Id.* at 82.

tolerance of the intolerable: nuclear war, the perpetuation of colonial relations, the “moronization of children,” waste, “outright deception in merchandising” and a host of other familiar objects of critique in his time and the present.¹⁸ These were objects of critique for Marcuse and his allies, but they were, he argued, met with an “impotent and benevolent tolerance” in the polity as a whole.¹⁹ This was motivated, at bottom, by a perception of money as a quantitative measure of worth. “Tolerance toward that which is radically evil now appears as good because it serves the cohesion of the whole on the road to affluence or more affluence.”²⁰ The primacy of money as a measure of value made reflection and judgment superfluous. Marcuse castigated the tolerance that refuses to praise and condemn. Democracy cannot set judgment aside.

The relation of my argument to those of Brown and Marcuse (and indeed, their relation to each other) casts a vivid light on the importance of judgment to democratic ethics. In a democracy one is always judging and judged, and that twice over. Each democrat is called to judge as part of the whole. Each is subject to the judgment of the whole. Each democrat judges and is judged by the other. When Locke asks “[w]ho shall judge?” and answers “[t]he People shall judge,” he reminds us that legislation is not the only role the people take in a democracy.²¹ They judge and they execute. Judgment, of and beyond the law, is the work of the democratic sovereign. In this sovereignty, the people affirm or chasten their laws, and decide the need for revolution. Democratic judgment is made formal and institutional in the jury and in the work of election. Judgment is also demanded in the ordinary workings of a common democratic—or even republican—life. One is called to decide, of course, what verdict to give on a jury, when to press for the making or the repeal of laws. One is also called, every day and in times of the greatest crisis, to decide who and what is to be tolerated. Marcuse is quite right to declare that “[t]olerance is extended to policies, conditions, and modes of behavior which should not be tolerated because they are impeding, if not destroying, the chances of creating an existence without fear and misery.”²² Many would agree that “what is proclaimed and practiced as tolerance today, is in many of its most effective manifestations serving the cause of oppression.”²³ We are, however, divided over which policies serve repression and which liberation; which policies ought and ought not to be tolerated. This is, with varying intensity, nothing more or less than democratic politics. We have different interests. We are differently situated. We have borne different burdens and enjoyed different privileges. We are moved by different fears and hopes. We work for different

18. *Id.* at 83.

19. *Id.* at 82.

20. *Id.* at 83.

21. JOHN LOCKE, TWO TREATISES ON GOVERNMENT 240 (Peter Laslett ed., Cambridge Univ. Press 1996) (1689).

22. Marcuse, *supra* note 15, at 82.

23. *Id.* at 81.

ends. It is in confronting this diversity that democrats demonstrate their commonplace courage.

III. COMMON COURAGE

We have become so accustomed to discussions of policy that we rarely recognize how much is at stake, how much courage is demanded of democratic people. The woman whose husband was shot by a mass shooter is expected to listen with grace and civility to those advocating unrestrained access to guns. The man whose unborn child is aborted against his will is expected to show the same grace and civility to those who have licensed, defended, had or preformed an abortion. There are many issues before us, today and every day, which make these demands on us.

The costs these debates exact are not always evident. They are clear enough to the woman in chemotherapy whose hair falls on the page as she writes her congressman on healthcare funding. They may be less clear for issues like student debt or growing economic inequality. It may be harder to see the costs for the man in his seventies who still owes money on his student loans, or the people who bear the weight of shame and failure because they make too little money. Virtually every issue makes grave demands on someone. Some issues make demand on us all.

In considering the issues that come before us, each of us must decide whether the law or policy or practice is something that should be tolerated. This extends well beyond institutional politics. There was a time when one had to decide whether it was permissible to call someone a nigger. At present, one may have to decide whether to punch a Nazi.

In these matters, especially those that touch on our informal interactions with one another, collective judgment comes through the slow formation or alteration of a consensus. That consensus emerges from myriad individual decisions. In this democratic field, we rule and are ruled simultaneously. We are shaped by and respond to an extant consensus. Our affirmations, tacit acceptance, evasion or undermining, or rebellion against the consensus, shape it in turn.

The role of the individual proceeds according to a different temporality. The building of social consensus and convention is slow, gradual, incremental. Yet it is impelled by immediate and often urgent demands on individuals. Those decisions, though they may be impelled by long reflection, are made in a moment. You decide whether you will punch that Nazi. You decide to join or restrain actions going on around you. You decide to speak or remain silent. The demand for these decisions clearly comes thick and fast in times of crisis—but it comes just as thick and fast, though more discreetly, in the conduct of daily life. For a people, judgment may be slow and incremental. For individuals, judgments are fast and decisive. Mindful of this, we should consider what Schmitt's "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception." might mean for the conduct of a democratic life.²⁴

24. CARL SCHMITT, *POLITICAL THEOLOGY 3* (George Schwab trans., University of Chicago Press 2005) (1922).

Individual decisions about what practices are to be praised or blamed, tolerated or punished, issue in social conventions and then, in some instances, in laws, regulations, and institutions. The boundary between formal and informal judgments is shifting and permeable. The boundary between individual and collective decisions works dialectically. Democratic judgments are made by the people and by each individual, they are made from the position of the ruled and from the position of the sovereign ruler. Judgments about practices are readily transformed into judgments about practitioners. Judgments about policy become judgments about people.

The will to judge, the insistence on judging, is essential to democratic practice. The democrat must be willing to praise and blame, to permit or deny, in order to perform the most fundamental functions of democracy: to legislate, to execute, to judge. Judgment requires thought, work, and courage. The one who judges must be willing to decide. One cannot always defer to another person or another time. This willingness to set deference aside marks the sovereignty of the democrat, the willingness to rule as well as to be ruled. The willingness to rule requires courage. Judgment drives the judge outward. Ruling drives the ruler outward. The judge, the ruler, must consider the questions, problems, even crises that do not concern them. The judge, the ruler, must listen to, learn of, imagine the positions of others. In these practices, the one who judges, the one who rules, confronts a chaos of the known, the partially known, the unknown, the suspected, the feared, the unheard of. The one who judges, the one who rules, learns aspects of the lives of others. The one who judges, the one who rules, confronts the chaos of an outside that is always outside, always other, never fully one's own. The one who judges, the one who rules, confronts—and must answer—the demand to act in the face of the unknown and unknowable. That requires courage. The rewards of that courage are great.

IV. DEMOCRACY AND DIVERSITY

The connections between diversity and democracy are old and intimate. Plato wrote dismissively of democracy. For him, though it was “probably the fairest of the regimes,” the democratic city was the sort of place that appealed to women, the young, and the masses (perhaps not the condemnation he intended).²⁵ “Many perhaps . . . like boys and women looking at many-colored things, would judge this the fairest regime.”²⁶ Al Farabi read and re-wrote the passage. Plato's slightly contemptuous acknowledgment of democracy's appeal becomes, in al Farabi's hand, a paean to democracy. He writes:

25. PLATO, *THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO* 235 (Allan Bloom trans., Basic Books 2d ed. 1968) (ca. 557 B.C.). The implicit recognition of the democratic city as erotic persists in al Farabi, *infra* note 28.

26. *Id.* Those translations, including Bloom's, that give the Greek as “fair” undermine the condemnation of surface beauty by acknowledging the presence of justice.

On the surface, it looks like an embroidered garment, full of colored figures and dyes. Everybody loves it and loves to reside in it, because there is no human wish or desire that this city does not satisfy. The nations emigrate to it, and reside there, and it grows beyond measure. People of every race multiply in it, and this by all kinds of copulation and marriages, resulting in children of extremely varied dispositions, with extremely varied education and upbringing. Strangers cannot be distinguished from the residents. All kinds of wishes and ways of life are to be found in it The bigger, the more civilized, the more populated, the more productive, and the more perfect it is, the more prevalent and the greater are the good and the evil it possesses.²⁷

I have not found a more beautiful or more precise description of the democratic city. Al Farabi recognizes both the promise and the danger of democracy. For him, as for Plato, diversity is characteristic of democracy. Democracy, a gate open to all, attracts all, whether they are welcome or not. Al Farabi suggests that whatever the conditions of their arrival, these wildly diverse people will join with one another. They will trade together, make and sell and eat each other's food, taste each other's pleasures, and make new children of every color and kind. Democracy does not overcome difference. Democracy attracts and proliferates difference. Democracy breeds diversity. It is diversity, Plato and al Farabi thought, that attracts people—"people of every race"—to democracy.

This democratic cosmopolitanism recognizes a common humanity with all that entails for democrats. We see in one another common strengths and vulnerabilities, a common reason, and, if we are democrats, rights held in common. We also recognize—and often delight in—the right of people to make themselves as they choose, both as individuals and as nations. They may be different from us, but we expect them to be welcome guests and warm hosts. Democratic cosmopolitanism does not belong only to the traveler and the city-dweller; it is as present in the rural and the sedentary. They too can open themselves to the other and see in their nations a place for all the world.

This runs directly counter to the view, common in our time, that democracy depends on trust and trust upon homogeneity. I hold to the old wisdom: diversity belongs to democracy. Homogeneity is contingent, relative, and fleeting. The Swedes, Norwegians, or Danes—who may appear so like one another to Americans—see Jutlanders and Sami. They mark ethnic and racial differences we cannot see. They see differences of class, faith, and occupation. They recall violent conflicts between regions and interests. They remember the years when they took horses and children from the Roma. When they look at the United States or Canada, Mexico or Brazil—indeed, any part of the New World—they may well see themselves as homogenous. Among themselves, they see diversity.

27. Al Farabi, *The Political Regime*, in *MEDIEVAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY* 51 (Ralph Lerner & Muhsin Mahdi eds., Fauzi Najjar trans., 1963).

Differences come and go. Once, Americans knew ethnic slurs to diminish Hungarians, Poles, the Irish, and Canadians. These are largely forgotten. Where they are remembered, they have lost their sting. Make no mistake: this is no predestined progress. On the contrary, once small and benign differences can come to be seen as great and threatening. Arabs, once hardly noticed at all, come to be seen as racial others. A geopolitical realignment, the emergence of new foreign conflicts, a border skirmish, or a local conflict over fishing rights, a casino, or mushroom hunting can awaken old enmities or create new ones. The question is not whether there are differences among the people. There will always be differences. There will always be diversity. There is always the potential for enmity. The question is how one faces it: with fear and loathing or with courage and curiosity.

Democrats grow accustomed to the presence of enmity.

The presence of danger in democracy is not solely due to the presence of different faiths, races, or ethnic groups. It is due to the differences of ideas, visions, hopes, fears, and beliefs. Few of these are the simple work of birth. In a democracy, one rules and is ruled in turn. One rules and faces the hazards of rule. One is ruled and faces the hazards of subjection.

Differences are always among us. They emerge in relation to the creation and dissolution of states and the recognition and refusal of peoples, in conflicts over resources, in response to technological developments, and through a myriad of other changes in lives that are inextricably bound to other lives. Occupational differences are essential to political life. Diversity is, however, rooted more deeply than this. The differences between one body and another, one mind and another, are always present, always visible. The recognition of common needs and a common precarity can lead to solidarity or contention, friendship or enmity. In both friendship and enmity, we are forced to the recognition that the person facing us is alien. We do not feel that person's pain or pleasure. We do not know that person's thoughts. Each of us is alien to all the others. Our lives are bound to others, but they are also, as embodied, radically solitary. Each always-alien person we encounter holds for us the danger of enmity and the promise of friendship.

The complex of desire and courage that democracy calls forth in democrats is therefore never for one *demos*, one people, alone. The democrat cannot easily tell strangers from residents. Democrats may look at their fellow citizens as foreigners. They may know them as enemies. They are also obliged, however, to see the potential for citizenship in the stranger. Democrats may also look at foreigners as they look at citizens. We are prepared to walk out into the world impelled by curiosity and desire, shielded with courage.

Diversity is fostered by democracy. Diversity requires courage. Courage is the virtue upon which democracy depends. Democrats live with uncertainty. Those who rule and are ruled in turn know that they live without stability. Policies come and go, offices change, laws are passed and repealed, and constitutions are made and unmade. Those who commit themselves to democracy commit themselves to a future that is always uncertain, to the possibility of endless change. At any

moment, the course can change. In democracies, revolution is always possible. Democrats go willingly into that unknown. Whether they love or loathe the new, they face it without fear. Whether they seek to preserve or to change, to remain as they have been or to refuse who they are, they master their fears.

Diversity requires courage, democracy calls forth the courage it requires. There are practices, old and new, that accustom us to diversity, that teach us its pleasures and the daring democracy requires.

V. THE PLEASURES OF DIVERSITY

The Greeks, and the old Norse who surpassed them in democracy, valued friendship. “In antiquity,” Nietzsche wrote of the Greeks, “the feeling of friendship was considered the highest feeling, even higher than the most celebrated pride of the self-sufficient sage—somehow as the sole and sacred sibling of this pride.”²⁸ The *Hávamál* holds, “No man is whole”²⁹ and offers the practical advice:

If you know you have a friend, and that he is true,
and that you will get good from him,
share your mind with him, exchange gifts,
and visit him often.³⁰

Friends, as Aristotle wrote, have everything in common.³¹ Friendship however, is predicated not only on likeness, but upon difference. Friends are sought for the lacks they remedy. Aristotle distinguished between the friends of need and convenience and “true friendship,” which arises between different people seeking understanding not yet within their reach. These friendships are marked by pleasure in the other’s distinct, otherwise unknown and alien, thoughts and insights. The pleasures of friendship are the pleasures of diversity in a common life.³²

Nietzsche valued friendship far more highly than marriage.³³ So, I suspect, did Aristotle. Sexuality, after all, belongs to many beings. A bond rooted in sexuality

28. NIETZSCHE, *THE GAY SCIENCE* § 61 (Walter Kaufmann trans., Random House Vintage 1974) (1882). I discuss friendship more extensively in *Reflections on Political Identity*. See ANNE NORTON, *REFLECTIONS ON POLITICAL IDENTITY* 35–37 (1988). It is telling that Jacques Derrida punctuates *The Politics of Friendship* with the apocryphal “Oh friends, there is no friend!” JACQUES DERRIDA, *THE POLITICS OF FRIENDSHIP* 1, 49, 177 (George Collins trans., Verso 2006) (1994).

29. *Hávamál* (*Sayings of Hár*), in *THE EDDAS: KEYS TO THE MYSTERIES OF THE NORTH* ¶ 53 (James Alan Chisholm trans., 2005), <http://www.jomsvikings.com/system/files/Havamal-Chisholm.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/WH3B-9NHG>]; see also *Hávamál: The Words of Odin the High One*, in *ELDER OR POETIC EDDA* ¶ 47 (Olive Bray trans., D. L. Ashliman ed. Viking Club 1908), <https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/havamal.html> [<https://perma.cc/3HEH-5MH5>].

30. *Hávamál* (*Sayings of Hár*), *supra* note 29, at ¶ 44. The Norse account, like that of Aristotle, acknowledges a hierarchy of friendships.

31. ARISTOTLE, *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS* 231 (Martin Ostwald trans., Bobbs-Merrill 1962).

32. *Id.* at 214–244.

33. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, *ON THE GENEALOGY OF MORALITY* 77 (Carol Diethe trans., Cambridge University Press 1997) (1887).

may be intimate indeed but, like the bonds between those Aristotle called “mess-mates,” and “stable mates” echoing Charondas and Epimemides this bond is less than fully political.³⁴ It is language that binds us in the highest forms of friendship, language that enables us to become political and, thereafter, fully human. Friendship trains us for the highest forms of politics. Friendship makes us at home with diversity. A friend is never wholly one’s own, never one flesh, never one name, never wholly alike. Each encounter with a friend is at once familiar and astonishing, intimate and alien. The friend is always known and unknown. The friend opens another world. Friendship teaches that diversity may be not only a threat but the greatest gift, not only a danger, but a source of pleasure.

The benefits of the diversity we can learn to prize are evident in capitalism as well. I am no friend of capitalism, but as a democrat I recognize its virtues. Small differences of clothing, food, music, and art are sources of pleasure. Capitalism depends on this pleasure, trades in it, cultivates it. Merchants seek out diverse goods from diverse cultures and these transform the world. No one knows this better than we do. We are people in love with the new. Without the new, trade slows. Why buy when the commodities are the same? A new fashion draws people to the stores. A new food draws them to restaurants, a new chef, a new type of food builds restaurants. People seek out new flavors, new fashions, new music. Even the most conservative aficionado of opera takes joy in hearing beauty in a different voice. This desire for the new and the different seeks out diversity. It encourages exploration. “He was a bold man that first ate an oyster” Jonathan Swift observed. It was a brave man who undertook the first trade in coffee, tea, tomatoes, potatoes, chocolate, and chilies. The desire for diversity turns the greed for wealth toward adventure and invention. The greedy man can become a brave one. The man who looks for a profit can become the man who discovers a new territory, new customs, a new world. Those who see the world in terms of monetary value can be directed toward beauty and use. Profit-seeking issues in novel financial instruments, in Rembrandt tulips and *raku* pots.

Capitalism finds a redemption in diversity. The bare abstraction of a coin, a bill, a sum, a cipher is transmuted into a cascade of commodities, vivid in their materiality. They have color, shape, texture. They have fragrance and taste. They bear meaning. They provide people with useful and desirable things, of course, but they do more. They offer a lexicon of meanings. With these silent goods, people speak of their aesthetics, their politics, their identities. With each exchange meaning proliferates.³⁵

34. ARISTOTLE, POLITICS 3 (trans. Carnes Lord, University of Chicago Press 2013) (350 B.C.).

35. Marx writes that “every useful thing can be looked at from the two points of view of quality and quantity.” Perhaps we should add a third: meaning. Perhaps it is already enfolded in “quality.” If so, it is nevertheless useful to recognize the semiotic character of commodities, since this often surpasses other forms of utility in determining their value. 1 KARL MARX, CAPITAL 43 (Friedrich Engels ed., Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, trans., International Publishers 1967) (1891).

The opening chapter of Marx's *Capital* recounts a series of transubstantiations that recalls the divine.³⁶ One thing becomes another. Capital, in Marx's account, has diversity at its core. Nothing need remain what it is. The linen becomes a coat, tea becomes gold, coffee becomes linen, and each may be made to take another form. In each object labor takes material form. "The substance linen becomes the visible incarnation, the social chrysalis state of every kind of human labor."³⁷ The world of exchange is impelled by the search for diversity, by the production of diversity. Trade depends on the recognition of diversity. Trade is impelled by lack and desire. Each wants something absent, something needed, something new. Each looks to the other who possesses—and who can provide—that which one lacks.

VI. CONTROLLING DIVERSITY

At this juncture, one cannot fail to recall that contemporary issues of racial, ethnic, and religious diversity in the West have their roots in Europe's colonial projects. Colonialism reveals the driving power of lack and desire. The desire for gold, silver, oil, and other resources impels some colonial projects. The appetites of the Dutch and British East India Companies for the rich, the rare, and the exotic fueled others. The expansion of trade remedies the lack of resources and desired goods; it feeds the desire for the new. Trade clears the way for empire.

Rousseau noted, in his brilliant and neglected *On the Origin of Language*, that alphabets belong to trading peoples. Alphabets enable one to capture and record words from any language.³⁸ One can write "tharwa" as easily as "wealth." One can transliterate Hindi, Chinese, and Khmer. One need not even know the language recorded. Alphabets thus permit an engagement with radical difference. The use of the alphabet is an ethical practice and captures the ethical difficulties of engagements with diversity. Alphabets drive toward the egalitarian. They render the familiar and the foreign, the understood and the opaque. They give them the same form and convey them to readers in the same way. They defer to difference; preserving it by giving it presence and voice.³⁹

Alphabets also drive toward mastery; to a hidden hegemony. The claim of the alphabet is that this is a system in which anything and everything can find a place. All can be represented equally. The truth in this claim is proven in the ability of alphabets to extend their reach, to serve as tools for contact, for trade, and for imperial power.

36. *Id.*

37. I use the term "transubstantiation" advisedly. The opening chapter of *Capital* is riddled with the language of the eucharist. As Marx himself observes a few pages later "we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world." *Id.* at 72, 77. Whether this is reason or revelation is a question I leave to others.

38. JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU, *ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE* 17 (John H. Moran & Alexander Gode trans., University of Chicago Press 1966) (1781).

39. This should be read literally. Consider, for example, the efforts of the American Philosophical Society to record and preserve indigenous languages.

The apparent neutrality of the letters pretends to a universality that is only imperfectly realized. Umlauts and cedillas mark the limits of Roman alphabetic universality. Alphabets are built by particular people for particular languages. A given alphabetic system bears the marks and has the limits of this origin. The drive toward equality that animates alphabets is haunted by systemic vestiges of the particular conditions of its origin and development.

Liberal procedures and institutions, money and other instruments of capital, the alphabets that serve to extend knowledge and empire are all means for the management of radical diversity. They open borders. They rupture limits. They permit the accumulation of knowledge, of wealth, of people in a common political endeavor. They enable people to confront the unknown. They give order to chaos. They enable the expression and the governance of diversity. They are also constraints on the freedom and power of individuals and of the people.⁴⁰

We recognize, and many hail, the fact that liberal institutions constrain democracy. Liberal institutions are seen as a supplement to democracy, securing order, continuity and predictability where it is feared democracy would not allow it. This fear is similar in structure and effect to the fear of death at the hands of another discussed earlier in this essay. This fear is also generative of constraining laws, institutions, and practices that extend and enhance the powers of states, corporations, and other forms of consolidated power. In these effects liberalism operates as a supplement in the Derridian sense; adding only to replace.⁴¹

The replacement of democracy by the liberalism that ostensibly supplements and secures it takes two forms. First, the apparatus of order and procedure, taken initially as the guarantor of democracy, comes to be seen as its substance. Second, that apparatus retains its generative power, extending its reach.⁴² Fears

40. I give short shrift here to the ways in which individual transactions, the circulation of goods, and the determination of value are structured and constrained by liberal institutions. An (admittedly inadequate) reading of the libertarian literature suggests to me that these constraints are studied only very selectively in even that venue. It would be good to do more.

41. A practical example of this can be seen in the discourse over the Catalonia referendum of October 1, 2017. Officials of the Spanish central government, and Felipe Borbón, characterized the Catalan referendum as an assault on democracy. What they objected to was an assault on liberalism. Thus, Rajoy in his address to Parliament said “The rule of law, plurality and democracy need to be restored.” *Catalonia: Mariano Rajoy Demands Restoration of Democracy*, DEUTSCHE WELLE (Oct. 11, 2017), <http://www.dw.com/en/catalonia-mariano-rajoy-demands-restoration-of-democracy/a-40904343> [<https://perma.cc/EJ85-U5MP>]. Felipe Borbón, in his second intervention in the crisis, declared that Catalan leaders had “broken the democratic principles of the rule of law,” in holding the referendum. *Pro-independence Catalans defy King Felipe VI's warning*, BBC (Oct. 4, 2017), <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41498685> [<https://perma.cc/7NNW-4WFW>]. Rajoy and Borbón have been unwilling or perhaps even unable to distinguish between the liberal (or indeed the legal) and the democratic. They echo a more sophisticated defense of a more aggressive assault on democracy offered by Jacques Derrida in relation to the military shutting down Algerian elections in 1991.

42. These processes have been usefully described by a number of theorists, notably Michel Foucault. Deleuze and Guattari’s account of the rhizomatic, which takes on a darker and less emancipatory form in this context. GILLES DELEUZE AND FELIX GUATTARI, *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*, (Brian Massumi trans., University of Minnesota Press 2002). Foucault’s exploration of the dissemination and extension of power through networks rather than from the center to the periphery is so pervasive a part of his work that no single citation can be given for it.

of the unknown, of the “other” who might be friend or enemy, of the mass of the people in which one is always both a part and apart, cannot be eliminated. They belong to the human, and more markedly, to the democratic condition.⁴³

Democrats sail forward, knowing that we may change course at any time. Democrats commit themselves to an uncertain future, to a life among enemies, and face it with courage. They may be rewarded (though it is of course uncertain) with friendship, freedom, and the pleasures of invention and discovery.

43. Sheldon Wolin argued that these fears tend to be increased rather than allayed by increasing military strength and technological power. See *Violence in the Western Political Tradition*, 33 AM. J. ORTHOPSYCHIATRY 15–23 (1963).