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Review

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schizoid relationship to each other and the natural world. Finally he links his reparative conception of reason to a broader notion of reparative individualism. In opposition to conceptions of the individual that emphasize self-interest, possessiveness, or even what people have in common, Kleinian theory points toward a concern for the other as other, as different from the self, a concern that is accompanied by a profound sense of the ways in which we tend to hurt each other. Here if anywhere there is hope for a pacification of human existence.

The major weakness, or perhaps merely limitation, of *Melanie Klein and Critical Social Theory* is that the argument goes in only one direction. We are offered a Kleinian reading of critical theory but not a critical reading of Kleinian theory. Moreover, the concept of reparation is forced to carry more interpretive weight than it can easily bear; and (in my opinion) Alford clings in unwarranted fashion to both individualism and a hostility toward large groups. Despite these limitations, however, he has made a valuable contribution to the dialogue between psychoanalysis and social theory. Others would do well to follow where he has led.

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Finding the Mean: Theory and Practice in Aristotelian Political Philosophy. By Stephen G. Salkever. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990. Pp. x, 287. $35.00.)

Beginning with the assumption that modern liberal political theory is incoherent (205, 30–31), Stephen Salkever seeks solace in Aristotelian social science. *Finding the Mean* unavoidably calls to mind Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue*, which is similarly dismissive of, in MacIntyre's case, contemporary moral philosophy, and attempts to develop an Aristotelian alternative. But Salkever lacks MacIntyre's argumentative flair and seeks in Aristotle a "new understanding of the theoretical voice" (207), rather than a full-fledged alternative.

Salkever locates the main strengths of Aristotelian social science in its rejection of the overly rigid and abstract character of contemporary thought. Aristotle believes that a discipline can be no more precise than its subject matter allows. Hampered by the need to respond to innumerable contingencies that vary from case to case, Aristotelian social science recognizes no standard more secure than the judgment (*phronēsis*) of a man of practical wisdom (*phronimos*) or "serious man" (*spoudaios*), who assesses different situations according to their particular features. Salkever also attributes to Aristotle the demand for a social science that, like medicine, is simultaneously explanatory and evaluative, as opposed to the contemporary differentiation of disciplines built upon the fact-value distinction.

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Because Aristotelian social science has fallen into disrepute because of the modern prejudice against teleological explanation, Salkever devotes his first chapter to a defense, arguing that Aristotle's teleology is neither objectionably metaphysical nor necessarily tied to the errors of his cosmology. Chapter II discusses Aristotle's teleological view of the human good. These themes are developed in Chapter III, where Salkever distinguishes an Aristotelian agent-centered morality based on the virtues from a more familiar morality of rules, and extends his analysis to portions of the *Politics*. Chapter IV detours into a stimulating examination of Aristotle's view of gender and the importance of family life. The final two chapters apply the discussion of Aristotle to liberal political theory.

Though Salkever writes well and displays impressive learning, *Finding the Mean* is not a successful book, nor is it likely to be of much interest to the vast majority of political theorists or classicists. This is unfortunate in view of the important questions that are discussed. Moreover, to my knowledge, there is at present no satisfactory, in depth account of Aristotle's political theory—analogous to W. F. R. Hardie's *Aristotle's Ethical Theory* (second ed., Oxford, 1980). But as Salkever's study indicates this gap is difficult to fill; the practical wisdom Aristotle teaches by its very nature resists codification.

The main problem with *Finding the Mean* is an overall lack of detailed, careful argument. For instance, Chapter I addresses modern science's bias against teleology. But there is no detailed examination of specific areas where teleology can make significant contributions. Much of the chapter strikes me as "bait and switch." Though discussion is conducted on the abstract level of "modern science," it is generally modern *physics* that is seen to be antiteleological, though what is wrong with this remains a mystery. Salkever defends teleological explanation by noting its importance in modern biology (e.g., 22–23, 26, 41–43), but biology too is "modern science." A detailed discussion of the nature of teleological explanation and its strengths and weaknesses is sadly missing from the book, in regard to biology, and surprisingly, functional analysis in sociology and political science. Nor are important theoretical applications of teleology discussed, such as G. A. Cohen's functionalist reconstruction of Marxian theory (*Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense* [Princeton, 1980]), or Carl Hempel's "The Logic of Functional Analysis" (in *Aspects of Scientific Explanation* [New York, 1965]), which clearly presents the method's ideological drawbacks.

Selkever criticizes liberal political theory, and modern liberal society, from a Tocquevillean perspective, because of flaws in its political culture. (He identifies Tocqueville as an Aristotelian on p. 245.) In the absence of strong religious commitments or a suitable conception of the good life, what is to deter liberal citizens from the unbridled pursuit of self-interest? Salkever's Aristotle has three main responses. First, the need for a convincing

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view of the good life can be met by metaphysical biology, which teaches the value of rational inquiry—as opposed to the purely instrumental view of reason propagated by liberalism (160). Second is Aristotle's central teaching concerning the need for balance, proportion, and harmony in life, that the good is found in a mean between various extremes, which is, again, always relevant to particular circumstances. Third is the need for public moral education to build a political culture based on Aristotelian norms.

Aside from the fact that Salkever is the victim of unfortunate timing, in that his alarums concerning liberalism arrive at an historical moment when liberal theory and society are enjoying unprecedented success, his account generally rehashes familiar material. For instance, in the 27-page concluding chapter, 17 pages are devoted to a discursive review of Tocqueville's themes, as compared to three pages on what Aristotle has to offer. Salkever's most provocative claim is that Aristotelian metaphysical biology can inform our view of the good life. But here he is curiously faint-hearted. Unaccountably missing from his discussion is a detailed examination of exactly what the biologically grounded good life consists of. To say that such a life includes rational inquiry as *a* good (159–61) is to say very little, unless one works out exactly how this ties in with all the other goods (liberty, health, material comfort, leisure, self-respect, etc.) that are recognized by liberal citizens.

As stated by John Rawls and other notable liberal theorists, the distinctive form of liberal theory is a response to its circumstances. Modern liberal society is characterized by an ineliminable plurality of views concerning the good life, held by individuals who still must live together in peace and social cooperation. Accordingly, central to liberal theory is the attempt to establish a basis for social cooperation that will be acceptable to proponents of different perspectives. Such theorizing is a necessary precondition for the effective exercise of practical wisdom. Though practical wisdom provides an important supplement to liberal theory, it is by no means a replacement, as Salkever seems to think, though he does not address the crucial question of exactly how Aristotelian and traditional liberal theory should relate to one another.

Nor does Salkever present a suitable framework for a contemporary equivalent of Aristotelian practical wisdom. Because he does not develop strong arguments from metaphysical biology, he does not provide modern liberal individuals with good reasons substantially to revise their views of the good life. In the absence of priority rules that are able to rank-order different goods—rules of the kind that Rawls attempts to develop—the value of rational inquiry will be weighed quite differently by different individuals and will do little to resolve disputes between them. In the absence of a single accepted view of the good life, individuals with practical wisdom but different conceptions of the good will assess particular situations differently. Lack-

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ing a society characterized by moral homogeneity, the existence of which Aristotle perhaps simplistically assumes (see 155–56) and for which MacIntyre pines, modern liberal *phronimoi* will frequently find themselves unable to agree upon a single mean.

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Liberal Neutrality. Edited by Robert E. Goodin and Andrew Reeve. (London and New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1990. Pp. 219. $49.95 cloth.)

This collection of essays attempts to clarify the meaning of neutrality within contemporary liberal political theory and also to assess the usefulness of this concept for evaluating and designing some of the basic institutions and practices of liberal political societies today. On these terms, that is to say, on its own terms it is a relatively successful endeavor. The individual contributions, originally papers presented in 1985 and 1986 to the Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom, are sound, and the editors have done a good job knitting them together and raising some important synoptic questions of their own. But in addition, this volume merits the attention of liberals and nonliberals alike for what it reveals about the assumptions of contemporary liberal political theorists.

Why be concerned with neutrality? As the editors and several of the contributors explicitly acknowledge, neutrality is not a primary liberal value. It is only an instrumental value in the sense that when institutions and practices are neutral, in the preferred sense, or when officials and their decisions are neutral, again in the preferred sense, it may be easier to realize primary, conflicting political values such as liberty, justice, and welfare. What is interesting about neutrality, at least these days, is that despite its apparently secondary status within liberal theory, it raises an unavoidable and even central issue on the practical level. The alleged biases of scientific research and development, the overt circumvention of government bureaucrats and civil servants in order to achieve more partisan policy analysis, disputes over accuracy in the media and advocacy in the classroom, and frantic pleas for unregulated markets underscore the need for greater clarity about the meaning and importance of neutrality in liberal political societies. These are live issues. They will be decided one way or another, and with them so will the effective truth of neutrality. If political theorists don't pay more attention to neutrality, they may discover that its meaning has been decided for them.

But even if neutrality's central practical importance outweighs its secondary theoretical place in liberalism, there are other problems that may stymie efforts to make better theoretical sense of neutrality. It may be just too heterogeneous a concept. As an ideal, neutrality is an attribute of persons, their

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