

and self-reliance. But these texts are not conclusive on this point, and by the time of *The Gay Science* in 1882, Nietzsche's elitist side clearly gets the upper hand in his thought. It is helpful and interesting to observe that Emerson's influence helped fend this elitism off in Nietzsche for a time, and perhaps a case can be made that Nietzsche remains conflicted in his later writings, or that his growing elitism is only about differences in actualization, not in basic capacities. But Zavatta offers no such claim and instead simply ignores the texts in which Nietzsche's elitism is most pronounced and unapologetic, as if his thoughts on equality and human potential were concluded by 1878. This is unfortunate, because Emerson's influence certainly lingers into the later writings—Nietzsche continued reading him throughout the 1880s, even as his published works defended aristocratic orders of rank and sought, with ever-increasing animus, to overturn the Judeo-Christian revaluation of values. Reckoning more squarely with the tensions with Emerson that arise in Nietzsche's later writings would strengthen, rather than undermine, the book's central argument.

Nietzsche never breaks with Emerson, as he did with his other most important "educators," but his last published comment on Emerson reveals an ironic distance important to observe. In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche writes that Emerson "instinctively nourishes himself only on ambrosia, leaving behind what is indigestible in things"; he goes on to compare him to a "worthy gentleman who returned from an amorous rendezvous as if he had accomplished his mission. 'Though the power is lacking,' he said gratefully, 'the lust is nevertheless praiseworthy'" (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann [1889; repr., New York: Viking Penguin, 1954], 522). The worthy Emerson remains a figure of radiant inspiration to Nietzsche, but one he now regards with an admiring smirk, from a perspective forged in depths entirely his own. Zavatta's *Individuality and Beyond* does not fully observe the distance from Emerson that Nietzsche ultimately travels, but it reveals much in Emerson's influence that is real, pervasive, and enduring.

John Holzwarth, *Lewis & Clark College*

Judith N. Shklar. *On Political Obligation*. Edited by Samatha Ashenden and Andreas Hess. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Pp. 264. \$45.00 (cloth).

This is a reconstruction of the lectures Judith Shklar gave in an undergraduate course on political obligation in the spring of 1992, shortly before her untimely death. In the contemporary literature, political obligation deals with moral reasons to obey the laws of one's country. Scholars examine possible moral principles

and how they apply, in a fashion that can be described as analytical or “Rawlsian.” Shklar’s approach is different: it is historical and sociological. She is mainly concerned with how different subjects responded to conflicted loyalties and conditions that inspired nonobedience, guiding the reader through numerous historical examples. As the editors note, Shklar was a fox rather than a hedgehog (xvi). The texts she examines range from the ancient Greeks to contemporary times. While many of these are both familiar and expected in a work on political obligation, others are surprising. Moreover, authors one would expect to find at the center of this work are essentially omitted. Lectures for the course on Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, and Kant were not preserved. It is likely that Shklar lectured on these figures from lists of points rather than fully written-out texts. The editors provide a brief general lecture on Hobbes found in Shklar’s papers and fragmentary remarks on the other thinkers, which require an effort to make sense of. The same is true of a later lecture entitled “Consent and Obligation,” for which only blackboard notes remain.

The psychology of resistance dominates the early lectures. Lecture 1 concerns Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Ernst von Weizsäcker, Germans caught up in the Nazi regime. The former is well known, both as an important theologian and as an active opponent of the Nazis, who paid for his resistance with his life. The latter, though also despising the regime, remained loyal to it and eventually was tried as a war criminal and served a two-year prison sentence. Shklar is interested in the psychologies of the two men and how they decided on their different courses. She is especially interested in the process through which Bonhoeffer’s opposition became resistance, as he was swept along by events.

Lecture 2 analyzes the motivation of the main characters in Sophocles’s *Antigone*. As a variation on Hegel’s familiar analysis of the play’s tragedy as a conflict of two rights, Shklar explores Antigone’s fixation on death and hence what might be viewed as aberrant elements in her particular loyalties.

This is followed, in lecture 3, by analysis of Socrates’s behavior in Plato’s *Crito*. Scholars are aware that, in the dialogue between Socrates and the imagined Laws of Athens, Plato presents the only in-depth discussion of political obligation as conventionally understood in Greek literature. But Shklar is less interested in the arguments themselves than, once again, in Socrates’s psychology. She is especially intrigued by the fact that Socrates entirely sets aside Crito’s pleas that Socrates escape from prison based on claims of friendship. She views Socrates as “a perfectly awful man” (43), as he turns away from ordinary human attachments. She claims that he is motivated by “a wholly dissociated conscience” (48), and so a need to stay true to himself, rather than by loyalty to either his associates or his city.

Subjects addressed in subsequent lectures include Coriolanus, as depicted by Plutarch rather than Shakespeare, which she discusses in a lecture entitled

“Friendship.” This is followed by lectures on the New Testament and Luther, the main subject of which is the requirement to submit to even base rulers, since they are put there by God as a punishment for sin. The subject of divided loyalty during the medieval period is addressed by discussion of King Henry II of England and Thomas Beckett. This is followed by in-depth analysis of Richard II, in Shakespeare’s play, in regard to the king’s two bodies. Shklar focuses on tension between the king’s actual physical body and his other body, which is the realm as a whole. The final lecture in this series, “Tyranny,” examines the rise of Calvinist resistance theory during the Reformation, in which unjust rulers were identified as tyrants, which justified resisting and possibly deposing them.

After the fragmentary lectures noted above, the volume continues with a lecture on Hegel and ideology. The theme here is submission to the state, in accordance with historical laws of development, of a kind that Karl Popper would describe as historicist. Lecture 15 is on the British idealist T. H. Green and the new conception of freedom—positive freedom—made necessary by the social effects of industrialization. For Green and other supporters of “the positive state,” the state was necessary to create conditions in which people could develop their moral and intellectual faculties, in spite of existing social conditions.

Lectures 16–18 focus on systems that require obedience: religious and military organizations, and requirements of nationalism. This subject is followed by extended examination of civil disobedience. Lecture 19 discusses abolitionists who refused to obey American law because it was implicated in the great evil of slavery. Shklar is especially interested in Thoreau’s *Civil Disobedience*. She attributes the work’s influence to its renunciation of violence. Somewhat like Socrates, Thoreau was driven to resist by requirements of his own conscience, which he never doubted (172).

These themes are further developed in the volume’s longest lecture—15 pages—on civil disobedience in the twentieth century. The bulk of discussion is on exactly what civil disobedience is. Shklar’s account is largely conventional, centering on the most notable American example, the civil rights movement. Central to civil disobedience is struggle to change particular laws that are viewed as unjust, through political action. This is in contrast to attempting to change an entire regime, as Gandhi and his followers eventually did in India. Because of difference in scale, Shklar does not view the Indian example as civil disobedience, but as something more radical.

The following lecture addresses the related subject of conscientious objection, refusal to undertake military service for reasons of individual conscience. Shklar explores insuperable issues this practice involves, mainly difficulties in deciding what kind of beliefs should count, how to tell if they are sincerely held, and fairness—that some must serve while others are exempted because of tender conscience.

As noted, the lecture that follows, “Consent and Obligation,” exists in less than fragmentary form. On the basis of the board notes and suggested readings, it seems that this would have examined reasons for obeying the law and problems with them, in other words, the analytical material that dominates much contemporary discussion of political obligation. It is notable that Shklar would have devoted a single lecture to this large subject.

The final lecture concerns the obligations and loyalties of political exiles.

In addition to the course lectures, this volume includes a talk entitled “Conscience and Liberty,” which Shklar delivered at the University of California, Berkeley, and an appendix, “Why Teach Political Theory?,” which was previously published in an edited volume. Especially notable in this essay is Shklar’s insistence that successful teaching requires passionate involvement in one’s subject. This she clearly exhibits in this course of lectures.

These two additional pieces indicate the volume’s dual purposes. Shklar was an important political theorist, and to some extent, anything she wrote is of interest for this reason. It is possible that the volume is of greater interest to many readers for this reason than for its substantive contributions. An important concern is brevity. Each subject Shklar addresses receives a single lecture, of around 10 pages. This means somewhat cursory attention to complex issues. Historical background is minimal. Students in the course had assigned readings—the syllabus is included in the book’s introduction—and required weekly meetings with teaching assistants. These presumably added greatly to the experience of attending Shklar’s lectures. But readers of the present volume lack these components of the course. This would be a better book, and more accessible to readers with limited knowledge of the history of political thought, if it were fleshed out with additional background and further analysis of the different cases. It is possible that, had she lived to complete a book on this subject, Shklar would have expanded it along these lines, as well as providing the missing chapters on Hobbes, Locke, and other central figures. But as things stand, all that we have are these lectures.

However, this is still a worthy book. Shklar is unfailingly interesting on a subject of great moral importance. Her choice of subject matter is original and unusual, so almost any reader will learn from it. A central purpose of undergraduate teaching in political theory is to proselytize for the subject, to inspire interest in it and so to push students to learn more about it. At this task, the book clearly succeeds for both students and general readers. In spite of its limitations, the book does an excellent job of raising complex moral issues and leading readers into their intricacies.

George Klosko, *University of Virginia*
