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ACHIEVING GENUINE MOMENTS FROM ORDINARY ORIGINS: SHELDON WOLIN, HANNAH ARENDT AND JACQUES RANCIÈRE ON DEMOCRACY

by

GRANT HENDRICKS YARBROUGH

Under the Direction of Dr. Mario Feit

ABSTRACT

This paper grapples with the differences between genuine and ordinary democracy within the political thought of Jacques Rancière, Sheldon Wolin, and Hannah Arendt. Each discusses the problems of ordinary democracy and offer solutions in terms of what I call genuine democracy. Ordinary democracy is the established norm of liberal democracy celebrated as the stable and a desired "end" of political action. It is what happens when politics as usual becomes the norm and shuts the people from the halls of power. Genuine politics exist within the structure ordinary democracy and seeks to achieve the continuous re-establishment of democratic processes while in the process speeding up and disrupting "politics as usual".

INDEX WORDS: Momentary, genuine, democracy, Sheldon Wolin, Jacques Rancière, Hannah Arendt, Time, Disruption, politics, political

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Introduction

This paper looks at the tension, both antagonistic and temporal, between ordinary[1] democracy, which excludes and restrains the people[2], and genuine democracy[3] where people as citizens practice genuine politics.[4] I look at genuine democracy resulting from ordinary democracy. Genuine democracy does not exist as a permanent structure, for precisely at the moment of institutionalization, it becomes ordinary. This moment of constitution represents a midpoint in the genealogy of democracy, prior to the mid-point lies the revolutionary struggle for the establishment of democratic ends;[5] however, once achieved, the focus shifts to the desire to undermine those ends, causing the desire to attempt to revive the pre-constitution revolutionary actions through calls for a new founding or re-founding. Genuine democracy exists within the structure created by constituted government, what we most often see as ordinary democracy. It is an analogous to a bubbling liquid in a cauldron. The cauldron contains the factors leading to

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[1]In *The prettier doll: rhetoric, discourse, and ordinary democracy*, the authors discuss the contradiction within what they define as ordinary democracy. Persons must speak both as citizen and neighbor and "weave together social membership and citizenship" (Tracy, McDaniel, Gronbeck 2007, 226). The authors therefore place both political and non-political within their conception of ordinary. I focus on the purely political side of participation and note that genuine politics requires one to participate as a political being. Relegation to social being only leads to what I have defined as ordinary democracy.

[2] Margaret Canovan delivers an in depth treatise on the subject of "the people" in politics and political thought. However, when I say "the people" I mean the inclusiveness of all citizens, regardless of age, voting, or immigration status in the constituted political system. What Canovan points out and to which I agree relates to the subject of genuine, "the people cannot be restricted to a group with definite characteristics, boundaries, structure or permanence though it is quite capable of [these]" (Canovan 2005, 140).

[3] Part of the foundation of genuine democracy is a democratic ethos. "[A democratic ethos] entails an egalitarian constitution of cultural and political life that encourages people to participate in defining their own troubles and possibilities and to articulate those troubles in public and as citizens" (Euben 2001, 259). Fundamentally, genuine democracy, and the democratic ethos on which it is based, depends on individual citizen action and advocacy. To engage with others in a genuine fashion is to engage in a "partnership of virtue" and "learn to think and speak in public and as public beings" (Euben 2001, 263). Such genuine participation builds on a virtuous cycle to increase commonality. Unlike the Athenian polis however, this is not limited to a particular space.

[4] I disagree with deliberative democracy literature, namely authors such as Benjamin Barber. However, as influence there is a vital degree of bottom up participation necessary for genuine democracy to occur and succeed. I also agree with him "that there is a civic ideal that treats human beings as inherently political" (Barber 2003, 8).

[5] This paper does not take an ideological viewpoint that progressive politics would benefit from genuine democracy. In *The Contemporary Political Movements of Jacques Rancière* Todd May takes a leftist anarchic approach to the problem of maintaining a genuine democracy. However, he neglects to mention that not all re-founding approaches necessarily come from the left. This paper rejects revolutionary (as violent) action and pushes for genuine democratic action.

genuine democracy. The liquid represents the mass of people within the organizational structure of ordinary democracy yet that liquid represents the disruptive possibility of the people always present within the structure of government, namely, the ability to shift and explode into action.[6] Genuine democracy represents the tension both within and between the people and structure of government to fight against institutional control of citizen and politics. This said however, ordinary democratic structures maintain a vital role as they provide a necessary bulwark against anarchy or absence of structure.[7]

As Arendt pointed out and the French Revolution demonstrated, unbounded political action by the people leads only to the complete destruction of existing political institutions, and, inevitably, the replacement of old structures with new that bring with them backlash of counterrevolutionary order.[8] An adherence to democracy and democratic principles requires the potential, if not practical, inclusion of all people everywhere equally. The emergence (or re-emergence of) widespread citizen protest, from the Tea Party and Occupy movements in America, to the Arab Spring, to the surprising demonstrations in Russia have all raised questions for me. How do temporality and disruption account for differences between genuine and ordinary democracy? Does ordinary democracy have a use in politics? Is disruptive behavior intrinsically detrimental to democratic politics or understandable and acceptable for democratic ends? How can (and or should) we strive to re-democratize the political arena?

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[6] In Federalist 49, Madison argued that the constitutional aspect of America's system was supposed to allow steam valves for release of public passions but overall keep the people from having too much popular sway over governance.

[7] It is important to note that these conceptions of government take place within, above all, a democratic framework.

[8] This is a common thread through the final chapter of *On Revolution*. Revolutions turn everything on its head. Arendt discusses the idea of a lost treasure as a way of looking at the past: gone has every part of society and its interpretation viewed within the context of the revolution.

Sheldon Wolin, Hannah Arendt, and Jacques Rancière each provide for views of what constitutes genuine and ordinary democracy.[9] Genuine democracy implies an organic political response to the constraints of a structured political system. It is the idea that participation and debate create an outcome wherein individual citizen interest pools and manifests in political activity. Genuine democracy does not limit citizens to a confined definition; anyone who takes part in shaping their own stake in the polity declares their citizenship through participation in the disruptive nature of genuine democratic politics. Ordinary democracy is the inevitable consequence of constitution of a political order. It finds itself tempered and managed by the "elite". The history of democratic governance has been the history of normalization and constraint on the people, directly or indirectly, through institutions and limiting the people's ability to engage in genuine politics.[10] Genuine democracy allows for a many-avenued entry into politics; ordinary democracy divides ruled from rulers.[11]

These terms depend upon the ideas represented in the antagonistic as well as temporal dimension of politics. Genuine is the lack of an order, less a system of governance than an idea that the governed and the governors have the same claim to rule (Rancière 2007).[12] The

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[9] In *Dissensus* Jacques Rancière speaks on the Marxist understanding of the difference between "real" and "formal" democracy as well as the "Platonic distinction" between democracy as "written law" and "democracy as a form of individual and social life". I want to be clear that I do not follow this literature with my distinctions of genuine and ordinary democracy. Genuine democracy occurs within and against the constituted system of law and order. I allude more to this in the chapter concerning the thought of Jacques Rancière. I also will substitute politics for democracy but only following genuine and ordinary.

[10] See Bilakovics 2012, 89: "democracy is no longer democratic when it becomes affiliated with the economy of power that a governing state requires. This contrasts with a genuine democracy never lacking "revolutionary possibilities" (Bilakovics 2012, 217).

[11] In *Constituent moments: enacting the people in postrevolutionary America*, Jason Frank makes the point that the "post-revolutionary crowd marks a democracy of the inarticulate insofar as it was perceived as a shadowy, virtual, inchoate identity without the crystallizing or articulating voice of a "leader" to give it form, to give it sovereign voice" (Frank 2010, 100). I reject this conception of people for all three authors, though Rancière's demos comes closet. Genuine politics means that these shifting formless people take ownership and voice their politics. There is no need to give themselves a voice because it already exists, however for the politics to succeed a viewable entity or tangible idea must "exist".

[12] Also, see the introduction to *Demokratia*: "Wolin rejects the idea that the democratic ideal is located within an institutional form; rather democracy is most fully realized in agonistic action that breaks with constitutional forms" (Ober and Hendrick 1996, 7).

distinction between genuine and ordinary involves such terms as fast/slow and disruptive/orderly. As contained within the tension of genuine and ordinary, democracy is a distinct language of time.

Time is an ever-present part of democracy and political interaction. Interaction between individuals of necessity requires time to organize and communicate ideas and make demands on the governmental structure. Ordinary democracy uses the established procedure and structure of institutions to control time, often resulting in either "gridlock" or rushing consensus past the ability of the people to take time to understand[13]. Genuine politics disrupts procedure and breaks the monopoly on control of time bringing it within the domain of democracy.[14] Citizens take back control of time though their participation in disruptive politics, genuine democracy occurs at the speed citizens set.[15] Rather than becoming subject to a "set time" citizens' participation is a part of time, acting in though not controlling, debate and discourse time.

These three authors each take a point of view as to what the effect of constitution of democratic government is on the nature of genuine and ordinary democracy. Sheldon Wolin addresses the constitutive nature of government and the structuring and assigning of politics to a controlled speed vs. the continuation of formless, non-constituted politics that cannot be subjected.

Hannah Arendt discusses democracy as participatory action leading to constitution as the end goal. She describes the move from the speed of revolution to the pace of constituted government.

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[13] Bonnie Honig wrote an excellent book related to this subject called "Emergency Politics".
[14] See the procedural differences between the "aristocratic" Senate and the "populist" House and how they originated.
[15] See Wolin "What time is it? And "Democracy and Counterrevolution" as well as Arendt discussion of the speed of revolution in chapter 6 of *On Revolution*

Finally, Jacques Rancière marks the difference between genuine and ordinary as that of "politics" vs. "police". For Rancière, the police control the allotment of time and the dispensation of participatory elements. Genuine democracy surfaces alongside the disruption of the police' control over time. Politics is the manifestation of individuals' collective democratic demands for inclusion and participation, as well as difference from the oligarchic state.

Section 1: Sheldon Wolin

Sheldon Wolin's conceptualization of genuine democracy[16] presents a notion that such a conception is "rare" and "episodic" (Wolin 1994, 1; Wolin 2005, 1). [17] It is an uphill battle to capture something that itself refuses to become encapsulated; the end of democracy is "how we equalize politically in acting together for shared purposes" (Wolin 1996, 24).[18] It struggles against ordinary democracy where "modern democracy turns into a state; the state turns into a megastate; political power is omnicompetantly administrative and hence only marginally liable to scrutiny and check" (Kateb 2001, 43). Wolin seeks to find a level field where "ordinary citizens" become "political beings through the self-discovery of common concerns and modes of action for realizing them" (Wolin 1994, 11). Genuine democracy lies in the contestation, conversation, and synthesis of ideas. The point where genuine democracy is most easily accessible lies on one side of a gap; the other side consists of ordinary democracy, a "form" of governance. Constitution of government is partly responsible for the creation of this gap.

The role of the demos leads to the moment of constitution, however once enacted a divide begins to take shape between the demos and ordinary democracy. However, it is also separated

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[16] Wolin has a long and varied history on political thought. For this essay I focus on this thought on the very narrow subject concerning a genuine politics as Wolin approaches it, namely, that politics is a unique and specific phenomenon that engages citizens in a public display of their rights and desires. See *Wolin on Theory and the Political* by James Wiley. He notes that Wolin defends the subject of politics, i.e. genuine democracy, from its absorption into the more general social scientific establishment of Economics, Sociology, and Game Theory (Wiley 2006, 216). He goes on to point out the difference between "the social" and "politics". Somewhat unintentionally, I have adopted these terms with regard to ordinary (encompassing almost all aspects of organized human behavior within a specific governmental structure) and genuine (or "the political" as "the essence of politics" and "political engagement") (Wiley 2006, 219).

[17] A great deal of my zeal in defending the notion of Wolin's democratic thought comes from Nicholas Xenos' essay "Momentary Democracy". Though the essay is very sympathetic to a formless view of democracy it nonetheless gives an excellent starting point for this section with the assertion that "it exists in the moments when we open ourselves and our communities to the unfamiliar and unsettling, then dissolves when a new familiarity and new settling takes place" (Xenos 2001, 36).

[18] Kateb makes the claim that "genuine democracy, a continuous institutionalization of popular power through some apparatus of direct participation, is not desirable" (Kateb 2001, 47). I agree that a basis of direct participation ("participatory democracy") is undesirable; however, the continuous, spontaneous, disruptive, insertion of the people into politics is desirable.

out such that a "voice" is more difficult to achieve. Yet the creation of a voice represents "discursive traditions that [emphasize], as the core of democracy, its demotic and participatory elements" (Wolin 1996b, 63). Less an end, genuine democracy is continual politics without constraint; the establishment of ordinary democracy leads to genuine democracy finding itself in opposition.[19] In between is constitution as the manifestation of order, i.e., government.

To describe this interplay between genuine and ordinary democracy Wolin uses a variety of varying terms to represent similar ideas; ideas such as "taking time" and "deliberative" note that genuine decisions are "arrived at" via bottom up citizen movements rather than "made" by a top-down structure of hegemonic government by bureaucratic fiat (Wolin 2005, 10). He also discusses genuine democracy in the terms of "fugitive" and "demotic" vs. ordinary democratic terms of "managed", "electoral", and "constitutive". Wolin sees the constitution of government as the death knell of fugitive democracy and demotic participation and action. As soon as we decide on a system of rules, we begin to be ruled. Voting and elections are just ways in which we have a veneer of popular power when in fact it is merely the allowance of that power to be expressed every two or four years (Wolin 1994). For Wolin, genuine democracy exists when fluid movements arise spontaneously against the constraints of constitution, which Wolin calls "the political" (Wolin, 1994, 11). "The political" also exists as democracy freed from the constraints of constitution (Wolin 1994, 11).

A rough opposite of the political, politics is "the legitimized and public contestation…over access to the resources available" it is "continuous, ceaseless, and endless"

[19] In "Wolin and Oakeshott, Similarity in Difference" Botwinick discusses Wolin's separation of pre- and post-Constitution America as well as discussing the difference between "the body politic" or "political economy". Before the Constitution was enacted, the former took precedent, post-Constitution it was the latter that gained supremacy. In discussing ordinary vs. genuine democracy, we can use these terms and situate them in a pre- and post-constitutional framework. Genuine democracy must fight against the subsuming of the political, (i.e. "by the people") into the economic, as comprised of elites and technocratic experts (Botwinick 2001).

(Wolin 1994, 11). Wolin locates “politics” within the realm of a constituted democratic political system (Wolin 1994, 11, 13-14). Another way Wolin describes politics concerns “agitation” which he defines: “to ‘perturb, excite, or stir up’ [yet] can also mean ‘to discuss’” (Wolin 2005, 3). He goes on to offer another definition of agitation as "the deliberative politics of representative legislatures” (Wolin 2005, 3). Agitation, works with both politics and the political and, in a temporal sense, both take time. When politics and the political are left undisturbed that they settle into ordinary. To use physics as an example, something “freezes” when its molecules are calmed or slowed down to the point where any movement is imperceptible. To the contrary, when something is agitated in a physical sense the molecules are stirred and heated up, and move faster. Thus, disruption intertwines with temporality, the more something is constrained, more solid and slowed down.[20] On the other hand, agitation leads to a freeing up which leads to a speeding up which leads to more agitation.[21]

Wolin has two conceptions of time in mind as well as and how they relate to genuine and ordinary democracy. In the first, time is caught up in agitation and (uncontrolled) revolution (though they have no control over it): “[r]evolutions …represent an effort to hurry events, and make things happen more rapidly”, genuine politics is “inspired intervention, sudden, short-lived, dramatic, disruptive, uncooptable” it is time and agitation speed up to a boiling cacophony of movement and noise (Wolin 2005, 5-6). On the other hand, ordinary democracy is “orderly, stylized, shaped and limited by prescribed processes, procedures, even time-tables” (Wolin 2005, 6). In the latter, there is no disruption or “transgression”, only politics as usual. Ordinary politics

[20] The more its molecules are constrained the slower they move, the more solid the object gets, which constrains the molecules more etc.

[21] Also to include in this part, not sure where, is the idea that in addition to moving toward a constitutive moments we instead look at them as individuals pockets of constitutive moments, depending on what the goal is to achieve. I have in mind here movements, like the civil rights movement, the women’s movement and the gay rights movement, but also more individualized moments where small groups of citizens take to the streets to demand action on an issue like the freeing of a political prisoner or the protest of a Supreme Court decision.

and democracy, as the result of its own constitution, represent the "end", ontologically and temporally, of democratic and political striving. The managed and orderly ordinary democracy exists in a frozen time.[22]

Time and disruption move in accordance with which side of the constitutional divide they are located.[23] Revolutionary time, as it lies on the pre-enacted side of constitution moves neither slowly, nor independently of events; it is caught up in a torrent of ideas and quickly swept along (Wolin 2005, 4-6)[24]. Unfortunately, Wolin's momentary democracy outside of form equates more with anarchy than with genuine democracy. Ordinary democracy contains the anarchic elements of genuine democracy yet allowing it to build momentum. Without control, the spontaneous and unrestrained nature of the demos manifests to a detrimental degree the disruption of anti-democratic constitutionality. Within ordinary democracy however, the anarchic or spontaneous-ness of genuine, revolutionary politics disrupts the "normal" flow of political time: constitutionality "regulate[s]…the temporal rhythms or periodicity of politics, and they give it ritualistic forms, e.g. every four years the [people are allowed to vote]" (Wolin 1994, 14). Furthermore, democracy as "movement rather than form" and "carried along by revolution" represents that which has already occurred; Wolin argues: "democracy is a rebellious moment that may assume revolutionary, destructive proportions, or may not" and succeeds "only

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[22] In "Democracy as the Radical Ordinary" Romand Coles argues that even ordinary democracy exists in tension with itself. This could prevent a complete freezing of the political yet he also declares, "every particle of the ordinary is itself in episodic need of interruption" (Coles 2008, 171).

[23]Michael Shapiro discusses Wolin's conception of 'temporal disjuncture' and 'instability of political time' (Shapiro 2001, 233). He follows Wolin (and Rancière) that it is the theorist's job to display the disjuncture that erupts between citizens with specific interests yet is contained by their role as citizens. Ordinary democracy paints over this rupture while genuine democracy cultivates it.

[24] Wolin make a distinction between political time and cultural as well as economic time, the idea being that political time is what is "episodic and rare" while culture and economics are ceaseless (Wolin 1997). Constitution frees us from having to debate political time and leaves only cultural and economic time, which is why the "revolution fails at precisely the moment it succeeds". See "Wolin as Critic of Democracy": Kateb takes the Wolinesque view that "democracy can only be a moment…doomed to subside and to leave the prevailing structures intact" (Kateb 2001, 39). What we need then is disruption of the institutions of, but not the constraints on, democracy itself.

temporarily" (Wolin 1994, 23). Ironically then, genuine democracy exists when citizens organize themselves into corporations to "concert their power for…a thousand other common concerns of ordinary lives" (Wolin 1994, 24).[25]

Wolin notes this disruption concerning ordinary democracy yet does not allow for a post-constituted democratic politics. We must push back against politics as usual, as it already exists, rather than repeatedly attempting a new constitutional order. While Wolin bemoans "managed democracy" and the harm it does to democratic citizens, he does not consider that the "anarchic" nature of revolutionary agitation would, given no restraint, result in a vast but shallow pool, devoid of meaningful participation[26]. In such a conception, the lack of a way to channel political discourse or action would prevent a productive politics. What the constraints of bureaucratized government serve is to give leverage to democratic agitation, excessive boiling of the cauldron serves the same purpose as pouring it out, namely, the destruction of the substance of the agitation within[27]. Granted, this looks precisely like the "managed" nature of agitation Wolin fears, however, maintaining a constant revolutionary, antagonistic, though short of revolutionary, undercurrent is what keeps citizens informed, excited and participating. Thus rather than "crystallizing" and coalescing into a managed bureaucratic democratic state, there is a constant source of agitation and movement. Ironically, the actions of the bureaucratic state are what serve to agitate the people themselves.

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[25] More on this later but it seems to deal more with "the necessities of life" than the political.

[26] It is possible that Wolin does consider this point, that anarchic, agitative action overwhelms the status quo, and sets up a new constitutive moment, but that once this moment is achieved, the vast shallow pool is all we are left. He still does not seem to consider speed within this calculus. Action is dependent on speed to disrupt the status quo and while sometimes the speed of events can outpace the ability of actors to control them I believe Wolin would be accepting of this, provided that a backlash clamping down on freedom did not occur retroactively (a la the terror following the French Revolution).

[27] See Wolin "Tending and Intending a Constitution" in *Presence of the Past:* post-constitutional political culture in America "can be accurately described as shallow: at one end, an elite culture…at the other, a mass culture" (Wolin 1989, 99).

At the same time democracy is fleeting, its genesis (pre-constitution) lies in disorder and chaos.[28] The enemy of genuine democracy therefore is the absence of politics either because of its systemization or because of its destruction via revolution. For Wolin: "chaos was the material of creativity" and "disorder…aroused the impulse to build societies" (Wolin 1960, 243). On the other side of this however lies fear of nothingness, Wolin describes the "state of nature" as "the condition of political nothingness" (Wolin 1960, 244). We can see political nothingness as anarchy, the lack of anything political, and the result of a scorched earth campaign against genuine democratic elements. The crystallization of politics occurs when one side "wins" the other "loses". A genuine spirit of compromise therefore, degenerates into an ordinary game of "my way or the highway".

For Wolin's democracy is "not ultimately about winning, but about acting together", extra -constitutionally or -governmentally. Yet this does not address the problem of divide or boundaries. Under these conceptions, two methods of governance emerge. Constituted government that remains in place, as "a parallel politics of process—legislative, administrative, judicial, and military—[it] flows continuously of its own accord" (Wolin 1994, 14). Alongside exist the "revolutionaries" those who break out of the bounded nature of ordinary democracy can practice a genuine movement but one that is incomplete. Genuine democracy, for Wolin, contains no "political parties", "government gridlock," or "corporate welfare", but it contains no solution for the continued existence of the productive side of democracy and economics. Wolin claims that for "there to be a democratic rejoinder", the "alienated and politically disenchanted will have to learn how to become citizens rather than remain angry voters (or nonvoters), and…will need to be reacquainted with democracy" (Wolin 1996, 23). Wolin, unabashed in his assertion that his audience are left leaning or citizens un-decided and hurt by the interests of

[28] The Hobbesian state of nature is truly democratic.

those on the side of corporations and the right, shows that it is the destruction of politics we must fear not the boundaries themselves. Politics consists of the destruction and reconstruction of internal barriers allowing citizens to make their own voices heard while preventing a complete destruction of order.[29]

[29] Wolin does not seem to reconcile is that both sides use disruption for their purposes, and I would argue that the right has recently used it more effectively to "hijack" both national debate and the public mood. The procedures of the Tea Party and the "Contract for America" that Wolin refers to follow the normal creeds of ordinary democracy; get your supporters angry and voting, but-and this is the important part-do not allow them to talk. Disruption by one side cannot be expected to begin a political conversation. Rather, it breaks down the wall between the two sides of genuine and ordinary democracy to allow for the possibility of conversation.

Section 2: Hannah Arendt

Arendt does not approach the concepts of genuine and ordinary as contradictory; rather, the momentum provided by genuine democracy leads to the establishment of ordinary democracy, however, once established genuine democracy sets itself against ordinary democracy. While Wolin fears the achievement of constitution will be the death of genuine democracy and politics[30], Arendt argues that the achievement of an effective constitution (via revolution) in America has led to a deification of the founding fathers and what they accomplished therefore prevents new attempts at a re-founding.[31] In the American case, this state of affairs removes the realm of politics from the unworthy citizen[32], rethinking the source of rights and participation in order to expand them becomes a blasphemous sacrilege.[33] Therefore, lost is the ability for us to participate in revolution as the founders did and experience for ourselves the thrill of politics.

As if we would profane such a sacred undertaking were we to attempt the same "miracle" work as they did. The "lost treasure of the revolution" exists because we have moved the founding to the realm of the sacred and consequentially, governing, to the realm of ordinary

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[30] Jeremy Waldron however makes this same claim for Arendt stating "often her tone is one of lamentation, close to despair, that certain things that might have been done are now impossible, that we have closed off certain practical possibilities in the way we have nurtured our political heritage" (Waldron 2010, 19). There is a similarity the "fugitive democracy" of Wolin and the "lost treasure" of Arendt. Benhabib, in the same volume expresses the opposite sentiment of Waldron and argues instead that "human equality supervenes upon a basic fact of the human condition, namely to the every present capacity to initiate the new and the unprecedented" (Benhabib 2010, 4). This approach too is taken with Wolin, see footnote 13.

[31] Arendt ties founding to religion in the Roman context, I have applied it here to the American. As she says, "religious and political activity could be considered almost identical" and "the binding power of foundation itself was religious" (Arendt 1968, 121). The American Constitution and Founding Fathers receive the same degree of reverence.
See also Bonnie Honig's excellent article on Arendt's understanding of the founding: "Declarations of Independence: Arendt and Derrida on the Problem of Founding a Republic" *APSR*, Vol. 85, No. 1 (Mar., 1991), pp. 97-113

[32] I disagree here with Margaret Canovan who likens the US Constitution with the founding of Rome and the Catholic Church. This kind of permanence is exactly what excludes the citizen and leads to ordinary government (Canovan 1994, 108).

[33] One might look at the rhetoric over the "strict constitutionalist" view of the Constitution. The Constitution can be changed by legislative and appealing to the people but any attempt to re-examine it in anew context is met with stiff resistance.

democracy. Arendt understands genuine democracy manifesting as "action": the ability of citizens to engage in politics by entering the polis and utilizing political speech.[34] Genuine democracy asserts itself in the process of founding[35] and for this to be achieved citizens must undertake the "miraculous" action that only exists within the political arena. Ordinary democracy is born from the constitution of barriers. Revolution is the final step on the path that ultimately leads to that which it has previously undermined; therefore, the end of constitution both temporally and ontologically is revolution. Genuine democracy disrupts ordinary through continuous re-founding; instead of a fixed, unalterable point in time, politics is ongoing and mutable. Genuine democracy is the interplay of action and politics. For Arendt, rather than briefly gaining access to, we achieve a lasting genuine democracy. We gain access by leaving the private realm and overcoming the "necessities of life" (Arendt 1968, 12).[36] Once able to leave the private realm of economics we understand politics as what "arises in what lies *between men* and is established as relationships" (emphasis mine) (Arendt 2005, 95). We practice politics when we converse with each other and approach politics as a gathering of free, political individuals separated from worldly influence. The "world" and "history" are loaded terms that

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[34] Barber criticizes Arendt, noting, "the lethargic, the apathetic and the alienated will be excluded" (Barber 2003, 227). However, here the order has been reversed. They are loathe to participate because the revolution has succeeded and deification of the originators discourages new disruption. When citizens participate in continuous re-founding, even their apathy can have political undertones as it displays a lack of agreement with current thought. Earlier he notes this when he declares in reference to Arendt's call to action "In states defined by watching rather than doing…citizens, like spectators everywhere, may find themselves falling asleep" (Barber 2003, 123).

[35] Consisting of the breaking down and reconstruction of internal barriers within the "natural order" of governmental boundaries.

[36] Markovits points out the important connotation with regard to the thought of Hannah Arendt. On the one hand, we must overcome these necessities to act in politics, the reverse, "overwhelming concern for one's private life… [has]…disastrous consequences" (Markovits 2008, 175). We are to "direct our judgment away from the interior [-economic well-being] and back to the properly political" (p177).

Unlike the French Revolution, ancient Athens solved the problem of necessity with land, for them "too little property would leave a citizen without sufficient resources for an active public life; too much…diverts his attention and capacities from [public life]" (Euben 2001, 263). Though we leave the private realm of the hearth and home, we still keep our interests in mind when we engage in public discourse so that "property remains public even when it is private" (p263).

Just as it is difficult to separate the symbiosis, post revolution, between life's necessities and political participation, so we cannot disentangle genuine from ordinary democracy. Genuine democracy exists as a vital subset.

bring with them particular and lasting prejudices that cannot be overcome to achieve genuine politics. “All such prejudices… are judgments formed from the past” and are not “stupid chatter” but contain an “inherent legitimacy” (Arendt 2005, 151-152). Because of this, not only must we free ourselves from life’s necessities but also ignore knowledge of “the world”. This is not to say that we do not bring our own prejudices and worldly issues with us into politics but instead we bring only our personal understanding and knowledge. Arendt argues that the support for these unassailable prejudices comes from socialization with others and stems from generalizations and stereotypes incorporating phrases such as “they say” or “people say” and to which I add, “everybody knows”. However, once left to our own understandings and engaging with others who leave behind those common prejudices we are able to take on a new understanding and arrive at greater accommodation. Arendt calls this politics; I call it genuine democracy.

A simple reading of Arendt accepts the foundational aspects of ordinary democracy as a post-revolutionary constitution that grants rights and freedoms through voting and elections and stands directly opposed to the totalitarian structures of Soviet Russia, Communist China and Nazi Germany.[37] Yet she also advocates for genuine politics to work *within* ordinary democratic structures resisting collectivism and political stasis. Arendt declares that the “the end of rebellion is liberation, while the end of revolution is the foundation of freedom” (Arendt 2006, 140). Arendt in doing so tells us that the goal of revolution and rebellion is foundation or “ordinary” democratic activity.[38] By understanding that foundation is the end goal, Arendt’s thought fits with a viewpoint of ordinary democracy where politics is ended and governing begins.

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[37] Arendt distinguishes between ordinary democracy, ordinary politics, and genuine democracy.

[38] I use foundation not as a place to stand but as a set of constraints guiding our interactions. However, other authors refer to foundations as a base. In this sense it is possible for democracy to exist without a moral “base” but we agree to foundations when agree to constitution of the body politic. Here Canovan speaks of Arendt’s “anti-foundationalism” (Canovan 1994, 196) yet I refer to Kateb’s interpretation of foundation as “a frame of institutions” (Kateb 1984, 19).

> Authority as we once knew it, which grew out of the Roman experience of foundation and was understood in the light of Greek political philosophy, has nowhere been re-established, through either revolution or the even less promising means of restoration, and least of all through the conservative moods and trends, which occasionally sweep public opinion. (Arendt 1968, 141)

Consequentially, the citizens, who made the revolution and subsequent constitutional foundation by leaving their homes, have completed their task and are now encouraged to return home. The people had their genuine moment in the form of revolution, now "freed" from the burdens of politics and governing they must leave politics to the experts[39] and return to their private economic lives.[40]

Arendt's view of ordinary democracy stems from an understanding that the revolution cannot and should not be maintained and that where "permanent revolution" is attempted, the outcome is horribly contorted (Arendt 2006, 40-41). Arendt traces the history of modern revolution to the French in 1789 and notes "there has never been such a thing as several revolutions, that there is only one revolution, selfsame and perpetual". We can look here too at an inversion between the American Revolution (with "man [as the] master of his own destiny") vs. the loss of ability of the French actors to "control the pace of events". Really, it is not the revolutionary overthrow of government but the civil and useful revolution of genuine democratic politics that cannot be maintained. It too easily dismisses politics; to maintain genuine democracy requires that we maintain control of ourselves.

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[39] Canovan agrees this this inevitability. Stating that the "people must have edges" but that the "boundaries of a particular people are accidental" she seems to support the necessity that "the people" must leave governing to "strong leadership" otherwise "the plural capacity for action continually frustrates attempt to predict and control the outcome of projects" (Canovan 2005, 56).
Andreas Kalyvas engages this thinking in a footnote on pg. 254 of *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary*, noting that critics of Arendt claim that she neglects the ordinary. However, Kalyvas goes on to show that Arendt's "approach is remarkably similar to Schmitt's discussion of normal, constituted politics" (Kalyvas 2008, 255). In other words, ordinary democracy is the goal, but genuine is how we get there.

[40] This creates another problem though as the world of the social will overtake and overwhelm the world of the political, which is the only place where action can occur. For more see Hannah Pitkin *The attack of the blob: Hannah Arendt's concept of the social*. She offers a critique of the social as detrimental to the political as "ordinary people doing ordinary things" becomes the "fatality of some monstrous 'it' trying to take 'us' over" (Pitkin 1998, 5)

Arendt addresses the problems the French faced during the revolution as acting "out of time" but then discovering the inherently difficult nature of "[leaving their] private dwelling[s.]" Unlike the Americans, who were able to reconcile public and private affairs, the French, once forced into the public space, were never "liberated from tending to the necessities of life".[41] "[They] could enter the public space, the agora, where [they] moved among and spoke freely with…equals" but they were still saddled with the burden of living private lives (Arendt 2005, xxvi). In referring to the ancient Attic case concerning democracy Arendt notes the link between the French and their historic ties to the old feudal system. The sheer number of people cannot escape the necessity of eking out an existence thus creating a politics that placed the need for bread before political constitution. Thus while the people had gained their freedom from political tyranny in the form of the monarch, they were still yoked to the tyranny of poverty. In contrast, the American Revolution, comprising as it did men who were free to leave their estates and enter the political space, declared themselves independent of the political tyranny of the English crown but had already overthrown the yoke of poverty thanks to the bounty of the new world.

Arendt understands that for a stable establishment of constitution, the separation of power as well as the understanding that the sources of law and power must be separated. Arendt tells us that when the colonists declared their independence from England they immediately began the work of community building, of a new founding. Yet they were also able to build on structures of the past and the Romans as well successfully followed this plan.

The problem lies in the permanent revolution-ordinary but not democratic - as differentiated from a permanent re-founding - genuine but not democracy. Arendt goes on to say that the actual work of forming a constitution and solidifying action differed little from what the

[41]As Benjamin Barber explicitly states the "old French Revolutionary obsession with [the] economic question (security) that had greeted the first great 'terror' …in time led to the vanishing of the political question (liberty) (Barber 2010, 263).

colonists had followed from the signing of the Mayflower compact 200 years earlier. The pilgrims understood that wherever they traveled they carried the polis with them. The revolution succeeded because the people channeled their disruptive nature into the everyday process of governing. What Arendt argues that that the colonists never based their legitimacy on King or Parliament but in their pledges to one another to "combine themselves together into a 'civil Body Politik'" (Arendt 2006, 166). This led those same pilgrims, 150 years later, "to pledge to each other our lives…and sacred honor". The American Revolution began when the pilgrims left England. Thus from the Mayflower Compact through the Revolution the colonists were simultaneously able to engage in genuine democracy and participate in an every-day governance. The politics of revolution were never necessary.

In this conception, permanent revolutionary politics exist wholly different from foundational politics. It practices a politics that shuns organizational or representative roles and relies on direct, antagonistic, and sometimes anarchic elements. Eventually either a more organized politics emerges or the revolution degenerates into tyranny. Under these circumstances, a "revolutionary council" harnesses the popular fervor of the revolution then caps it. It is against this constraint that genuine democracy must resist.

Genuine politics and the recovery of the "lost treasure" consist, for Arendt, of continuous re-founding and re-mythologizing. Arendt discusses the "lost treasure of the revolution" in the sense that the Founding Fathers achieved a great and miraculous thing and now we are living out its end. We have settled into an ordinary routine where we look to the past, to a "strict constitutionalist" view. We are "successors on who it will be incumbent…to improve and perpetuate the great design formed by the ancestors" as politically autonomous citizens active and engaged in perpetuating the civil interest (Arendt 2006, 195). Ordinary democracy either in

the modern American context or represented by that of the permanent revolution removes the potential for amending and augmenting that which was decided at the foundation (or declaration of permanent revolution) In either context we are shut from power or the boundaries which are necessary to push against are removed preventing a cohesive politics from forming. It is a fine line for Arendt to walk, between the legitimacy bestowed upon a revolution (the "immortal constitution"), as displayed in the French Case, and the problem of "perpetual" union in the American Case (Arendt 2006, 194, 235).

Unfortunately, the problem with this conception means that those who are not give the freedom from economics leads to a two-tiered class this problem has been partially solved by a representative system of democracy but this shuts people from government even more while preventing those without economic freedom from ever being able to participate. This leads Arendt to assert that politics can only exist between equals and that as a result the only time politics can exist is within an oligarchic system where a few higher individuals are equal due to their freedom from "the necessities of life". The American case works because citizens are equal by virtue of yeoman farmer. Where a man has the possibility for providing for himself and his family politics can exist. Yet this is a fable, much as the myth of the Athenian "democracy" contained numerous women, slaves, and foreigners with little to no rights. The freedom in question is the lack of want for what makes daily life possible, thus freedom means leisure [to pursue politics, i.e., to speak]. Those who lack this freedom necessarily lack the equality necessary for politics.

Genuine democracy is the rebellion against such restrictions on participation in politics. Arendt recognizes this in her description of pre-Constitution America. The people rose against economic restrictions, and in doing so, created a new political landscape. The enacting of

Constitution however, freed the people of politics, thus relegating them to a passive status. At the pinnacle of pre-constitutional politics, a contract for ordinary foundation obviates the need for a political citizenry. The new stewards of democracy tell us: *we* have succeeded *you* can go home. Arendt juxtaposes the ancient conceptions of freedom and politics with the modern conception of leisure and influence. Under the ancient definition, freedom meant leisure to pursue politics. However, this created a bifurcated society where those with the leisure to engage in politics depended upon those who enjoyed none for they had no freedom from labor. These burdens prevented the possibility of political experience and so created non-political classes. Politics as part of the public domain also means that politics and the political require community, that is, in a non-economic (thus, non-private) realm.[42] The economic is individual; it does not require speech or action between equals. The polis, market, or public square becomes the focus of political action, as this is where political actors gather to discuss. Political inclusion for all people requires that the people have the ability to engage in "democratic", i.e. equal, discourse. Genuine democracy requires a degree of leisure time removed from the social realm devoted to a gathering of individuals in the purely political realm.

[42] See chapter 8 of *The Human Condition*.

Section 3: Jacques Rancière

Rancière's thought grapples with politics post-constitution.[43] Whereas Arendt and Wolin agonize over the achievement of constitution and what that means for a genuine democracy[44], When Rancière acknowledges, "We do not live in democracies…We live in states of oligarchic law," he recognizes that we are in a post-democratic mode of politics.[45] This ordinary politics[46] consists of the congealed and solidified politics that prevents the breakthrough of democracy to disrupt the existing order. Rancière understands the conceptions of politics and police to delineate the ability to participate, or suffer exclusion from, democracy. Democracy for Rancière is not a system of government it is the continual disruption of the system of government .That force, or group, disrupts the system of elite control over society by demanding an equal voice in the distribution of control over functions of society. This is not to say that democracy equals anarchy, though from the vantage point of elites, it would certainly look that way. Instead, "democracy is the practice of politics; it is the expression of the logic of equality through its assertion by those who have been told, for one reason or another, that they have no part in the determination of their collective lives" (May 2007, 25). The police dictate the function of democracy. From here, I call this ordinary democracy, divided into citizens and elites, ruling and ruled. Rancière hopes to "[reconfigure] the territory of the sayable, seeable, thinkable, and possible" so as to generate a leveling of political arena (Simons and Masschelein 2010, 513).

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[43] I take the term post-constitution because of the focal point constitution plays in this essay. However, another term for this post-constitution can be found in Willis "Theology in Post-Democracy" which represents a similar notion of the coalescence of institutions and corporatism within a de facto democratic system. The democratic institutions exist however; they are co-opted by elitist control.

[44] For this section, I substitute "democracy" for genuine democracy and "oligarchy" or "oligarchic" for ordinary democracy.

[45] "Postdemocracy for Rancière promotes therefore more than just a consensual blueprint for coexistence. It cements a state led, unidimensional perception of the world where constitutive conflicts and disagreements have been evacuated from 'the realm of visibility'" (Tambakaki 2009, 107). This notion of postdemocracy represents a foundation of what I try to understand about the nature of genuine democracy. It does not seek to establish itself only to assist in the formation of a more egalitarian democratic politics.

[46] Not to be confused with "politics in the ordinary sense) as particular social sphere or particular form of action)" (Marchart 2011, 130).

Democracy is the dichotomy of "us vs. them" and antithetical to the egalitarianism. This leads another requirement for the establishment of genuine democracy, that of equality.[47]

Equality is an essential part of Rancière's thought as it undermines the relationship between rulers and ruled. In obeying the actions of the police, the demos must understand the commands given: "Anyone capable of understanding an order is no longer in need of one" (May 2007, 24). Thus, within this communication, a form of equality exists and for a moment, the distinction between giver and receiver or orders is blurred. Equality then is the lynchpin for genuine democracy.[48] This equality however, manifests as the creation of a society of individuals of men, rather than as citizens. Citizens cannot enact democracy; this is an opportunity only to men who are independent of the anti-egalitarian institutions that are intertwined with society. The nature of institutions and democracy is inherently anti-egalitarian due their composition by groups. Only individuals as "men" can exist for when any structures are created, they are part of the police, rather than the disruptive politics that aim at outflanking the police.[49]

"We do not live in democracies…We live in states of oligarchic law," says Jacques Rancière. Ordinary democracy is oligarchic, a rule by elites antithetical to genuine politics. Genuine democracy, however, draws strength from the idea that the basis for rule is that there is

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[47] In a critical essay on Rancière, Marchart argues equality in the Rancièreian sense cannot be valid for to assume an equal politics (by lot, for everyone) would result in the "end of democracy" as it would "rid democracy of all politics" (Marchart 2011, 139). This is an interesting supposition but what is also assumes is a lack of structure of any kind, for to assign lot still means to assign a role "above" that of some *other part* of the population. We always return to the point where genuine democracy consists of that other part trying to gain entry into ordinary democracy.

[48] See Jodi Dean "Politics without Politics" in *Reading Rancière:* "when equality appears it appears within the order of the police. Politics forces it to appear and so changes this order, but the appearing remains within the order of the police. The order of the police is a condition for equality's appearance" (Dean 2011, 89).
Also: Tanke: *Jacques Rancière: an Introduction* pg. 56-57
Rancière states in the same volume "equality…must be verified continuously-a verification or an enactment that opens specific stages of equality. These stages are built by crossing the boundaries and interconnecting forms and levels of discourse and spheres of experience" (Rancière 2011, 15).

[49] Only by positing the elimination of delineations can an egalitarian nature of individuals as equals manifest, otherwise the result is some form of oligarchic (ordinary) democracy. Unfortunately the removal of institutions removes the container that exists formulate the "wrongs" which exist because of democracy. In other words, the oligarchic nature of democracy creates the police, which results in politics, a self-perpetuating cycle.

no basis for rule. It is the casting of lots or the "decision of God" that determines who will lead. The tension between these two conceptions creates a break, a "hatred" by elites and others who deem themselves "entitled to govern men by their birth, wealth, or science" (Rancière 2007, 94). In other words, there is a disjoint between our desire collectively to be equal vs. our desire as individuals to be treated preferentially. For the rule by God is only the last form, preceding it are the norms of ordinary democracy. When we choose leaders for their wealth, birth or knowledge they will preserve that system for those like themselves and we end up with an exclusionary system of governance that solidifies into permanence. Against this permanence must act those who have no claim to rule for theirs is the self-perpetuating legitimacy. The demos are those who disrupt the static nature of ordinary politics, in doing so the establishment of rule by no one breaks down the distinction of "them and us" as the rulership is constantly in flux.[50]

Rancière identifies a group of people that exist within ordinary democracy and hold within themselves the greatest potentiality for genuine governance. He identifies this group as the "demos". Rancière declares "the demos is not the population, the majority the political body or the lower classes" (Rancière 2010, 53).[51] Instead, the demos represents everyone and everything that has been rejected by those with legitimate appeals to power, birth wealth and knowledge (Rancière 2010, 52). [52] The surplus community comprises those who have no qualification to rule, at once everyone and no-one (Rancière 2010, 53). The idea of a "surplus

[50] There is another distinction at play here as well. Ordinary democracy declares that we are all democrats, genuine democracy functions when the plebs (a subset of the populous) have "partial demands" but "aspire to constitute a truly universal populous" (Laclau 2005, 93-94). Yet Laclau points out that within ordinary democracy "there is no room for distinction…between economic struggle and political struggle", like he and Rancière, the focus is on only the political as "the other simply involves the death of politics and its reabsorption by the sedimented forms of the social" (Laclau, 154-155). Genuine democracy exists as the political subset within greater society.
[51] The demos existing of everyone else has led to what Benjamin Arditi calls a "second tier of politics in civil society (Arditi 2007, 145). This second tier grants access into politics for groups that have similar interests, a so called "post-liberal archipelago" that includes "viral actions" and "networked initiatives" (Arditi 2007, 145-146)
[52] Shapiro calls this "a logic of disparity rather than of common identity" (Shapiro 2001, 232)

community" manifests in many different ways.[53] On the one hand, a surplus or supplement can be the extra, the leftovers, or the overflow. Taken another way it is a bounty, a boon, the result of efficiency and productivity. Either way the surplus is ancillary to the other that is used and produced. It is always extra. They are the addition to politics and police as Rancière sees it. The time for rule based on birth, knowledge, or wealth has been exhausted. Into this void step the demos; the people insert themselves into politics and in instituting equality.[54]

This itself is a quandary, how to guarantee, to institutionalize that which in its very essence defies institutionalization? How do we preserve democratic tendencies when those tendencies lead to the usurpation by organized governance? Rancière gives us the opposing notions of police and politics. "The police is a distribution of the sensible…whose principle is the absence of void and of supplement" (Rancière 2010, 36). Police is the functional apparatus of governing, of ordinary democracy. It is voting institutions, bureaucracy, lobbyists, and PAC's and the ability to enforce them. It is the first six of the reasons to rule, based on the reasons common to the history of political rule: heredity, money, and knowledge (Rancière 2007, 39-41; Rancière 2010, 30-31). Police is the functioning of government and society according to the machinations that produce, "groups tied to specific modes of doing, to places in which these occupations are exercised" (Rancière 2010, 36). The "police state" confines the exercise of politics. It is where there is no space for being just to be. Within the police state, ordinary democracy continues.

Rancière's introduces "consensus" as "the reduction of politics to the police" and "the reduction of the people to sum of the parts of the social body" (Rancière 2010, 42). The definitions and use of police and consensus represent the things within ordinary democracy that

[53]Plato articulated a negative interpretation with his diatribe on drones and the negative role they have in the community.
[54] See Tanke, *Jacques Rancière: An Introduction* pp. 61-65.

prevent the people as demos from breaking through and reclaiming their power to rule. Put another way: "because a group has no part, its claim to have a role, that is, to become visible, challenges the grounds on which the distribution of the sensible has taken place in the hands of the police, namely, inequality" (Ferris 2009, 40). True that the "claim to have a role" exists as the absence of such a claim but this is what makes democracy genuine. The elimination of the police levels the playing field among all citizens such that has an equal possibility of ruling and being ruled. However, we do not usually consider democracy and police state to exist within the same realm it they can coexist through the machinations of continuity, economics, and society.[55] The police or state of "consensus" is "ordinary", there is no chance, no differentiation, "a return to the normal state of things" everything proceeds according to plan (Rancière 2010, 43).

Fighting against the enforcement of police is the democratic nature of what Rancière's calls dissensus "the presence of two worlds in one" (Rancière 2010, 36). Genuine bubbles up within ordinary democracy and pushes against, disrupting the uniformity of the latter. Opposing the rigidity and formula of the police, "[genuine democracy] consists in disturbing this arrangement by supplementing it with a part of those without part… [Genuine democracy] is an intervention in the visible and the sayable" (Rancière 2010, 37). Genuine democracy represents the possibility of extra-ordinary action. Applied to Rancière's conception, genuine politics both undermines and creates itself. It breaks down and fights against the construction of new barriers to the practice of politics. Ordinary democracy of consensus and the police exist to divide and separate, preventing disruption by groups through isolating the individuals that comprise those groups. Yet Rancière is hesitant to declare that in order for genuine democracy to supplant

[55] I have in mind the Foucauldian idea of surveillance of power. Each member of the community exists as a cog in the greater machine of government/economics. The spaces which otherwise would contain self or identity do not exist. Ordinary democracy consists in this way, it is the lack of spaces for individuality or for Rancière: "dissensus".

oligarchy the former must completely break down and destroy the latter. Rancière sees Wolin's problem of fugitive democracy and responds that we must resist an end of politics.

> The 'end of politics' is the ever present shore of politics…itself an activity that is always of the moment and provisional….The 'return of politics' thus boils down to the assertion that there is a specific place for politics. Isolated in this manner, this specific place can be nothing but the place of the state…the 'return of politics' in fact announce[s] its extinction. [It is identified] with the practices of the state, the very principle of which consists in the suppression of politics (Rancière 2010, 43).

The practices of ordinary democracy are established. It is the purpose of genuine politics to disrupt this monolith controlled by oligarchs and bureaucrats. Rather than create an "end" genuine democracy acts as gadfly within an ordinary democratic structure. Looked at another way, the "end of politics" is ordinary democracy, for under this system politics has been shut down in favor of order, thus there can be no more progress or movement. Ordinary "'democracy' would be something like an 'oligarchy' that leaves enough room for democracy to feed its passion" (Rancière 2007, 74). Establishing an ordinary democracy frees "the multitude…of its worry of governing… [and leaves it] to its private and egotistical passions" (Rancière 2007, 75). Governing is something that takes place under ordinary circumstances. The boiling cauldron of disruption results in a re-organization rather than overthrow of the status quo. Reaching an end to politics elevates and entrenches a few at the expense of the remainder, genuine democracy occurs when the remainder reacts against the oligarchic tendencies of ordinary democracy.

> To say that a political movement is always a movement that displaces the given boundaries, that extracts the specifically democratic, i.e., universalist, component of a particular conflict of interests in such and such a point of society, is also to say that it is always in danger of being confined to that conflict, in danger of ending up being no more than a defense of a particular group interests in always singular struggles" (Rancière 2007, 84).

The boundaries are the limits of a particular conflict. Genuine democracy acts against those specific boundaries yet also allows for greater unified action against the larger hegemony of oligarchic government.

Yet this provides a benefit, oligarchy is stifling yet within stirs genuine democracy and, rather than displacing ordinary democracy, creates the possibility of constant (re)formations. Thus a "political demonstration is therefore always of the moment and its subjects are always precarious. A political difference is always on the shore of its own disappearance" (Rancière 2010, 39). Genuine democracy is disruptive and embraces its own impermanence within the bounds of ordinary democracy. It is a time of here and now, for the founding is the past and the shore of politics is unreachable. Genuine democracy exists in the immediate political times of disruption and protest less "a political or governmental regime (of equal participation or representation) among other less democratic ones, but as the constitution of a political subject through a manifestation and demonstration of injustice or 'a wrong'" (Simons and Masschelein 2010, 513). Democracy is the temporary formation of like-minded individuals into groups, to gather and oppose the police actions in enforcing the 'wrong', rather than replacing one democracy with another.[56] Acting outside institutionalization but also within the system of the visible and knowable, protest becomes the act of democrats as outsiders. For Rancière genuine democracy accepts the oligarchic tendencies of government yet rejects the cessation of politics and disruption within that government.

[56] However, I do not discuss it in this paper see chapter 8 in Rancière's *Dis-Agreement* for a fuller discussion of the "wrong" that is brought about by the police.

Section 4: Conclusion

The thought of these thinkers displays a clear conception of the creation of; adaptation to; and resistance against ordinary governance by an ethos of genuine politics. This ethos disrupts the monolithic structure of government to allowing a movement of citizen controlled antagonism. Wolin's search for a continuous politics that resists constitution yet ultimately surrenders leads to Arendt's mourning of a "lost" revolutionary treasure. As Arendt points out the lens of the French Revolution (and all subsequent revolutions it birthed and births), the desire to re-found will result in an anti-genuine political establishment. The achievement of a founding results in the nature of ordinary democracy. In this post-constitutional landscape, a politics and machinery of government clashes with the disruptive nature of the extra people who refused to go home. Subsequently these outbreaks of genuine democracy fear neither the "loss" of revolutionary treasure, nor the fear a "fugitive" democracy. Disciples of genuine democracy act with a disruptive temper within ordinary democracy yet do not seek the obligation of a singular (re)founding through the overthrow of the democratic structure because a (re)founding cannot occur. The structure of ordinary democracy defines the extreme parameters of genuine democracy instead of seeking continuous *partial* (re)founding, disrupting the hegemony of ordinary democracy and allowing citizens to pool their political tendencies into repeated re-involvement.

Genuine democracy does not exist as an opposite structure to ordinary democracy, nor does it seek to overthrow established democratic structures. It is formless politics described by Wolin based on what Rancière describes a logic that is not one. Genuine acts within ordinary democracy, breaking up the hegemony of the established system and allowing new participants and ideas traction within the political sphere. Politics is by nature active and disruptive. Citizens

cannot passively belong to a system of politics; they must act, vocalize their views, and disrupt ordinary processes that accompany ruling.

"Agitation" acts as the counterweight within ordinary democracy to prevent a stoppage of politics. Politics and genuine democracy depend on constant movement and motion, which moves politics along. That is not to say that genuine democracy is always progressive toward an ends, rather, its goal is expansion of a political citizenry. The cessation of politics creates a structural orthodoxy of democracy.

For these thinkers "democracy"--as governing structure and political ideal--remains a challenge, in its enacting and the continuation of democratic principles. For Arendt this constitution leaves behind the need for agitative democratic movements and results in a permanent, stable, and equal governing structure. However, Wolin rejects the Arendtian satisfaction with constitution and seeks instead permanent revolution, revolution as process. Inevitably, the process ends, constituting a new political system. Yet Wolin and Arendt follow a similar path, genuine democracy exists pre-founding in the form of non-constituted agitation leading to ordinary governance in the form of constitution. Standing on the other side of the gulf created by constitution, where political actors cannot return, Rancière advocates renewing continuous genuine action against a permanent ordinary democratic government. Speaking from the vantage of a "post"-constituted political system, this "retroactively" applies to Sheldon Wolin and Hannah Arendt as well.

The attempt to define and describe a genuine democratic viewpoint stems from that fact that it has been lost. There would be no need to define and advocate achieving something that currently exists. Each of these authors has, in their thinking described a feeling of "loss' that relates to an absence of a democracy free of structure and form. Taking as a fulcrum point the

constitution or establishment of democracy necessarily gives form and structure to something that previously was not there. In some ways this is productive, “If men were angels” we would have no need of such structure. What these thinkers have shown is that the establishment of structure has gone too far. Instead of government providing rules and guidelines for the practice of politics, ordinary democracy dictates the terms upon which we practice politics. The reclamation of politics comes from the disruption of established structures. Short of overthrow, genuine democracy seeks to re-organize the petrification of ordinary democracy allowing greater movement. Genuine democracy is not a fight lacking in all structure, rather, it uses existing structure to push against, gaining momentum from that which contains it.

Genuine democracy, as these thinkers conceive and debate, requires the sovereignty of individuals, each and no person (for better or worse) able through station or education to tell the demos what to do. That this the process that we cannot discredit, it is in understanding the political equality of individuals, that each has the same access to speech as anyone else, that we understand what it means to be genuinely democratic.

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