

Citizenship and the Pursuit of the Worthy Life BY DAVID THUNDER [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. xv + 210 pp. Paperback: US\$28.99]

What is the relationship between being a good citizen in a constitutional democracy and being a good person? By playing our parts as citizens, are we actualising our potential to live worthy lives, or are we risking moral purity? Citizens, even in liberal democracies, might find their integrity threatened by their civic duties, for example, to pay taxes and to vote in political elections, if they do not agree with the choices of the polity. Because of moral dilemmas in the event of conflict between one's moral views and the requirements of citizenship, it seems easier to compartmentalise citizenship within one's general moral life such that different moral principles are taken as applicable in one's role as a citizen. One might even regard citizenship as a moral hazard, and consequently, as far as possible, disengage from political life.

In view of the common tendency to demarcate the personal from the political, David Thunder refreshingly investigates in this book whether an alternative might be viable. Might citizenship in fact be integral to an excellent human life? If so, in what ways can responsibilities of citizenship be properly integrated into our general goals and projects in our attempt to live a worthy life?

Those who are versed with Thunder's integrationist ethics in relation to the legal profession (see David Thunder, "Can a Good Person Be a Lawyer?" (2006) 20 Notre Dame JL Ethics & Pub Pol'y 313) will recognise a familiar thesis in this book, which applies the same idea in a broader—societal—context, as he seeks to answer

the question whether a good citizen can be a good person. In his earlier inspiring work on the legal profession, Thunder makes a compelling case for a lawyer to integrate his work within an excellent life, against the dominant view of lawyering that suggests a compartmentalisation of one's professional life and an application of different moral principles in the professional context. Thunder's idea of lawyering contrasts with the "amoral ethical view" of lawyering propounded, for example, by Stephen Pepper (see Stephen L Pepper, "The Lawyer's Amoral Ethical Role: A Defense, a Problem, and Some Possibilities" (1986) 11 *American Bar Foundation Research J* 613), which makes the moral argument for lawyers to provide their clients with legal services without being coloured by moral judgments about the purposes and actions of their clients. This leaves lawyers enslaved to their clients' consciences, all in the name of affording their clients full access to the law, which Pepper argues is essential if those who are not legally trained are to be first class citizens in a society where law is ubiquitous. On the contrary, Thunder mounts an argument for lawyers to retain their moral autonomy. Taking what he calls a natural-teleological view of law as an enterprise designed to promote key aspects of human flourishing such as peace, public order, justice and the common good, over the American legal realist view of law, Thunder contextualises the work of the lawyer within such an enterprise. Legal professional practice must be oriented towards the ends of the enterprise, rather than the subjective ends of the client whose autonomy has primacy under the amoral ethical view. Since the lawyer's role is to be understood in terms of their function (of legal advocacy, for example, in litigation) in an enterprise oriented towards such goods, at least within a liberal democracy, the lawyer who has acquired human virtues such as prudence, justice, courage, temperance and so on in their personal life is also likely to be professionally excellent.

Just as the earlier work on lawyers hinted at the possibility and importance of conceiving one's roles in light of functions one performs within a larger societal context, this theme is more ambitiously advanced in relation to one's role as a citizen in a constitutional democracy. Thunder's thesis about the integration of professional and personal excellence for the lawyer is replicated in his analysis of citizenship. He presents the case for the duties of citizenship to be embraced as an integral part of a worthwhile life, rather than merely for its public, political benefits (such as securing a stable society). The integrationist view has been under-considered. Amongst other reasons for the neglect, Thunder observes that modern political theorists have demarcated the public/political from the private/personal. John Rawls, for example, advocates for a political conception of justice to be formulated to regulate the basic structure of government, and distinguishes it from comprehensive doctrines held by citizens, which settle personal questions of what is good, meaningful and so on for the entirety of citizens' lives.

Thunder makes four main moves in this work. In the first move in Chapter 2, he sets the stage by sketching the picture of a worthy life—one which is excellent and admirable, all things considered. A worthy life is a life lived with ethical integrity: an agent must attempt to integrate all the particulars of their life (projects, actions, and dispositions) into what they reflectively and responsibly take to be a worthy life, rather than to treat each of these haphazardly; the coherence must also be directed at morally praiseworthy ends. Second, in Chapter 3, he describes the demands of citizenship in a constitutional democracy. His account is neo-Aristotelian and he

notes that in the focal sense, a citizen, amongst other things, participates in political rule in some capacity, performs some form of public service to the community, has rights accruing to members of the community, has duties to abide by laws save in cases of grave injustice, is guided in choices by agreement with other citizens on justice and the common good, and so on.

In Thunder's third move in Chapter 4, he critiques two non-integrationist approaches to citizenship and a worthy life: that of Rawls and Reinhold Niebuhr. While Rawls expects citizens to separate the political domain from the associational or familial, and be guided by the political conception of justice formulated for the political domain rather than by their comprehensive philosophies of what is good in life (given the existence of extensive differences), Niebuhr expects a citizen's moral ideals operative at the personal level to be compromised in political life. Thunder acknowledges that Rawls values coherence between the citizen's comprehensive doctrine and the political conception, insofar as he expects endorsement of the political conception by the citizen. Thunder, however, finds Rawls naïve to expect an actual or meaningful overlapping consensus of comprehensive doctrines (which would have meant that all or most citizens affirmed the political conception) when citizens embraced comprehensive doctrines with different ideas of the good. That Rawls's separation of the comprehensive (personal) and the political competes squarely with Thunder's integration is most obvious when one realises that Rawls extols the virtues of tolerance, of not insisting on the whole truth as the basis for public decisions, of being willing to meet other citizens halfway. Rawls endorses such virtues over other goods of human flourishing. Against Niebuhr, Thunder suggests that the conflict between the political and the personal is greatly exaggerated and in fact the same moral values govern both spheres.

In his final move in Chapters 5 and 6, Thunder enunciates his integrationist thesis which does not demarcate the personal ethical and the political, and anticipates possible objections to his thesis. The first reason for integration is that embracing our role as citizens in a constitutional democracy enables us to address the challenge of our inter-dependency by responding effectively to the needs of others who might otherwise remain strangers. Second, it "exposes us to a concrete way of life that vividly embodies and transmits human virtues such as generosity, magnanimity, courage, justice, and temperance" (at p 142). Having set out the reasons for integrating our civic role into our lives, Thunder then turns to examine how the civic role may be assimilated into our lives, as well as offer practical guiding principles for engaging the process of assimilation with integrity.

While this is a work on ethics and political philosophy, it will also be of considerable interest to constitutional theorists and legal philosophers reflecting on issues such as the justification for law and public decisions in pluralist deliberative democracies, unjust laws and legal obligations, and civil disobedience. The consistency of Thunder's insistence on ethical integrity stands out when one reads this book alongside his earlier article on lawyers, which applies the same integrationist ethics to the legal profession. His more extensive account for integrating the civic role into an excellent life might also apply *mutatis mutandis* to integrating one's legal professional role into an excellent life. Such coherence of thought should challenge us to live examined and integrated lives, to reconcile moral principles that apply in

our different roles, instead of taking the easy way out by compartmentalising the political or professional domains of our lives.

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