

DeVane Lecture Discussion – 2-15-01

AK Good afternoon. Welcome once again. We are here this afternoon to discuss with Professor Michael Denning of the American Studies Department the themes of his provocative lecture of Tuesday—“Neither Capitalists nor American—The Democracy as Social Movement.” Following our customary practice, Michael and I will have ten minutes or so of conversation, start things going, and then I would invite those of you who have questions to put or points to make to join in.

I thought we might begin by my inviting you to elaborate a bit on the value or the family of values which democracy, understood in the very expansive way that you invited us to think about it on Tuesday, represents. And maybe I can put the question in the following way: democracy, in your view and I suspect in the view of many of us here, surely means more than just what you were describing as bourgeois parliamentary democracy—universal enfranchisement plus legal protection of certain basic rights, the right of free speech, of assembly and the like. It means more than that. Today it includes—again, I think for most of us—the apparatus of the welfare state as well, the income support systems and welfare systems and redistributive tax mechanisms of the welfare state. These, for us today, also count as part of what we mean by or would include within the notion of a democratic system of government. But you want us to go well beyond even that, even beyond the welfare state at its furthest present extent and, in particular, you would like us to take seriously the thought that institutions—non-governmental institutions in the economy, in civil society-- which are not, today, run or administered in a democratic fashion, be so. At one point, you said something like this (I don't think these were your exact words but it's close enough): “The progress of democracy can be measured by the number of places, other than the polling place, where people vote.” And so you suggested, in particular, that the principle of democratic self government be extended to the workplace, to institutions of higher learning and a variety of other locales which are not presently run in a democratic fashion.

My question is this: Many listening to this proposal, and counting themselves good democrats, would react by saying, “Well, that's an interesting proposal, but the extension of democratic self government to these institutions would have to come at a large price. It would have to come at some considerable cost in efficiency, for example. Or perhaps in the protection and preservation, the nourishment of qualities of merit, of excellence—using that word in a vague and undefined way. And I'm wondering whether you think that there is anything at all to that anxiety, to that response. When someone says the extension of democracy to the workplace might be a good thing but it wouldn't be costless. It could only come at some considerable cost in efficiency terms. And the extension of democracy to colleges and universities, for example, would have to come at some cost is educational value, merit, excellence—however one wishes to characterize it. Is there anything to that? Should we be concerned here about how to balance competing values? Or are there no values to be weighed on the other side that are in genuine competition with the family of values represented by the democracy?”

MD Let me take two possible thoughts on that. I guess it's partly the frame that I think that I come from (which is, perhaps, because I'm more a historian) is not particularly oriented to try and come up with policy suggestions. But it's also because I think that the point of view of the democracy is not the point of view of managers. So the question of cost and efficiency is one that . . . They're different kinds of questions. I forget whether it was in Ian Shapiro's or Rick Levin's talk—they talked about the Pareto notion of efficiency which—if I can remember how to paraphrase it in a sense—is a situation where no one could gain more without someone losing something. Well, it does seem to me that someone's going to lose something. I do think that there really is a kind of fundamental reality of class conflict, both in this society and around the world. And it is unlikely that we are going to get to further democratization without some people who have an enormous amount of resources, power, money, capital, losing something. And that kind of win win thing—that somehow we'll all gain—it does seem to me unrealistic and a strange definition of efficiency, as far as I can tell, because it rules out the issue of redistribution of resources. So that's why my initial sense would be, it may actually cost some people in some parts of the society dramatically. On the other hand, our present circumstance, the dramatic inequalities of income and wealth, cost lots of people an awful lot. There are people who are suffering in the given situation, and so it does seem to me that that's why it's hard to put it in that kind of cost benefit analysis. And I think the same thing is true, in some ways, of the merit argument. I have little against rewarding merit in various ways. I think most of us hope that the people who do things for us will do it in competent and good ways . . . But the strange thing is, it seems to me evident in a democratic society that there is too much merit, not too little merit. And usually, institutions of higher learning like this are actually about excluding people who are perfectly meritorious. I know from having been on different Admissions Committees where we sit around the room and all of us agree that the top x number of people are, more or less, equally meritorious, and have to make that cut. And so it does seem to me that the opening, in a democratic way, of more possibilities, more opening of these institutions is a way to encourage the merits, the skills that people have that are out there. And I do think that, in general, my point of view is based on competence and skills of most people. I actually think that it's not that most people are incompetent and we have to look for those few that have true merit and true excellence, but that, actually, there's a remarkable amount of talents and skills in ordinary people that are not being put to use. Millions of people around the world are unemployed. That's not an efficient use of human resources, if one puts it in those kinds of terms, and it does seem to me that that's the kind of way I would respond to it.

AK Is the program that you describe and advocate, at its core, a program of redistribution? I mean, I'm moved to ask this by your first response to my question. What else is there to the democracy beyond an aggressive program of resource redistribution?

MD I think there would be three things. And I also want to say that I tend to not think of myself as a political theorist inventing the ideal program. I draw my program from the social movements that I align myself with. And in some ways, it seems to me, the programs that have been put forth by the labor movement, by the women's movement—I've learned. Parts of my programs are things I never would have thought would have

been part of my program because various people in those movements have told me, “You should be fighting for this as well, even though you don’t think that it matters to you as a man, it does matter.” And it does seem to me that, in some ways, in democratic theory, there’s a kind of abstractness and airiness that you sort of think up, what would ideal worlds look like? And that doesn’t seem to me the way that democracy works, which is not to say there aren’t values and ideals that have been built in that. I can think of three different kinds of things on that. One is the extension of the democratic state in the sense of the social democratic state. It does seem to me we are at a point where political scientists who are measuring what counts as a democratic state, that access to universal public education, universal public health, various kinds of income security for people who are unemployed, injured, sick, old age, parenting, that those things seem to me part of what we should think of as necessary parts of the democratic state. There’s an awful lot that’s there. The second one is the redistribution . . . When we think of redistribution, we normally think of it in terms of redistribution of money and wealth and income and those sorts of things and use the tax system or whatever. Very important issues. But redistribution of the working day—the labor movement in the early days was about shortening the working day and every generation was a fight for that. By the 1930s, on the agenda was the demand for the 30 hour week. That’s been entirely forgotten. A redistribution of people of leisure and labor so as to more equalize that. If we have these tremendous productive resources, it does seem to me the 30 hour week, longer vacations, the week-end. You know that great bumper sticker—the labor movement, the people who brought you the week-end—that’s true. And it does seem to me, the redistribution of time is one of the fundamental elements of this. In fact, I would put that in the struggle over the working day, which also means the working week, the working year, the working lifetime. Retirement is, essentially, a shortening of the working day, the working lifetime. Taking out prime years of 18-22 year olds and putting them in a college is essentially a shortening of the working life in order for the values of education and all of that. It does seem to me, you have to think about a long term working day and working lifetime, and the redistribution of that. And most of the accounts—I know there is some debate among the economists—but Juliette Schorr’s work, which I found very persuasive—the economist up at Harvard—has argued that Americans are working more now than they were in the 1930s, that the working day and the working year has gotten longer and longer.

AK But you’re optimistic that we could shorten the working day or the working life and maintain roughly the level of material prosperity that we’ve achieved, or even increase it, that we could have more of everything—more free time to do as we wish, and more resources, material and other—to deploy in the pursuit of whatever plans we’re following in the extra free hours that we have.

MD Yes, I’m entirely optimistic. One thing that the socialist has long shared with the liberal tradition and with what President Levin was saying was a certain kind of faith in the productive capacity of those new machines, those new technologies to actually make labor lighter in the long run. The curious thing, the great paradox at the heart of Marx’s work was why, if there’s all this new productive power—these machines—is the working day getting longer and longer? That was the paradox he wanted to solve at the starting point. And the sense that, indeed there was this capacity. And it does seem to

me that we have gone from strength to strength. Now, there are other things that have tempered the optimism of both sides of that in terms of the consequences—of the pollution of the environment of those machines, of the use of energy, and so another side of me—if we were talking about democracy—might want to say something about the possible conservation and thinking about the limits of our over-consumerized world and things like that. But nonetheless, I think in terms of supplying what we think of as a good life to people around the world, that is within our abilities.

AK I can't resist—one more question—and then we'll open it up. There are those who have said, following Max Weber, that the real despotism of the modern world isn't the despotism of capital but of bureaucratic administration, both in its governmental political form but also in its economic form as well. We live in a world—and this is really one of the most deeply characteristic features of the modern world in Weber's view—that has divided tasks of administration, production and the like up into ever finer and more distinct units of endeavor which have to be coordinated through complicated systems of oversight and hierarchical management and the like, and the sheer complexity of the modern world drives this process forward, both in politics and in the economy. And one consequence of this is—now, to put it in the terms that Marx did—the stunting, the withering, the shriveling of the broad human capacities for involvement, interest, endeavor, experience, pleasure, across a wide range of different activities. We all become little atoms constrained within a very narrow orbit and that we can't escape—now, this is Weber, not Marx—we can't escape so long as our civilization remains the complexly evolved one that it has become. Adam Smith celebrates the division of labor. It is, for him, the engine that drives the market. For Marx, the overcoming of the division of labor and the intellectual and moral and experiential separatism that it entails is one of the great hoped for triumphs that lies on the other side of the capitalist epoch through which we're passing. Weber says that's a pipe dream, that a cataclysm may break up our civilization from without and bring it to ruin, but so long as we remain roughly on the track we're on—capitalist, socialist, even communist—we will be stuck with bureaucracy and its stultifying consequences.

MD I would want to amend that in one way. It seems to me that what Marx argues—and he takes division of labor quite seriously, taking it right out of Smith—is that there are two different kinds of division of labor that Smith conflates, that economists right up to the present apparently from last week continue to conflate in some ways, which is the social division of labor and the workshop division of labor. The social division of labor, in fact, the sense that all of us will have different kinds of skills and that in a complex society, not everyone will be a doctor at some time. That famous line in the early Marx about being a hunter in the morning and a fisher in the afternoon and a critic after dinner—was a satirical line. It was not, actually, his model of what he imagined. The social division of labor, he thought was necessary and was one of the things that the developments of capitalism over small individual production and small agriculture was an advance. The workshop division of labor, the absolute dividing of different kinds of jobs, the separation in the workshop of conception from execution, of the mental labor from the manual labor, was something that he saw was basically about trying to increase profits by making sure that the lowest paid people could do the simplest tasks and that you kept as few tasks as possible for the higher paid people, and that it was

also labor discipline, so that one could manage and make sure that people were doing the work all at the time. And so that Marx made a careful distinction between the social division of labor and the workshop division of labor. And so I think that his was not a pie in the sky sense that we would ever overcome in a complex society, that social division of labor where we have different kinds of occupations and things, but did think that democratic processes in the work place and a different kind of work could break down the really stultifying workshop division of labor, putting people on assembly lines, doing the same task over and over again, and that there were other ways to organize work. And that, I think, is not pie in the sky. And that, I think, really is one of the things that the labor movement has fought for over the years.

AK Let me open the discussion at this point. Anyone who would like to put a question to Professor Denning, or make a comment, please come to the microphone.

MD I'll remember bureaucracy also.

Q I have several questions, so if nobody else steps up here, I'll just walk up and down the aisle and keep asking my questions. I think it's a little bit short sighted to answer Mr. Kronman's question (the cost benefit of the increased power of the democracy) simply in terms of class struggle. And the reason I say this is because it seems like the increase of democracy does not merely incur cost on the elite or the ruling class, if you will, but also upon the power of any organization to accomplish a certain goal or to act upon a certain principle because it's now constrained by the will of these masses, and I think this applies to NGOs as well. And I was wondering what the gentleman might have to say about this idea.

MD Maybe this is a way to pick up the bureaucracy thing—because I do think that the struggle between bureaucracy, which is to say, some kind of, perhaps, undemocratic, but relatively efficient way of administering things. And democracy is a powerful contradiction. It does seem to me it's one more open to democracy than capital because bureaucracies and administrations have been regularly thought about as being accountable in one way or another to a democratic state. So that state apparatuses are always in danger of getting beyond and becoming autonomous and acting in their own interest as apart from the voters. And the key case, it does seem to me that the socialist movement has tried to learn something from this because bureaucracy and the stultifying effects of bureaucracies without democratic control is one of the principal lessons and legacies of the communist experience, it seems to me. And so I would not want to underestimate the difficulties of matching bureaucracies—both the important things that they do by getting together people who can do a task and getting it done in that sense, and the fact that they don't necessarily always work democratically. But it seems to me that that's a kind of tension that is worth working through and thinking about, and there are various ways, I think, of thinking about the . . . keeping bureaucracies, whether they're party bureaucracies, state bureaucracies or public industries, let's say (if it was not a corporate board, there would be some kind of board that runs it) that would be accountable. If one thinks of it in terms of Yale, one could imagine, even in the short term, situations where there were representatives of the City of New Haven that sat on the Yale Corporation, that there were representatives of the

unions at Yale that sat on the Corporation. Now, there would still, no doubt, be Yale bureaucracies that would make it difficult for those representatives to actually get things done. But at least, then, there would be that kind of friction. And it does seem to me that one of the important things in thinking about democracy and bringing it to institutions outside the state is to produce that friction between bureaucratic regimes and democratic aspirations.

Q My question concerns the problem of the tyranny of the majority. You seem to be saying in your lecture, Professor Denning, that the greatest or the truest forces for democracy have been populist working class or proletarian movements, and you named the chartists, socialists, communists, abolitionists, a number of others. But to the best of my memory, the only group you named that actually took power was Cromwell's revolution and I think I find that hard to defend, particularly considering Cromwell's persecution of Irish Catholics. So how would you respond to . . . Do you agree that there is a destructive tendency in many popular movements and a sort of tendency to tear things down without having much of a plan to build them back up?

MD That's a good question but let me take a couple of possible answers on that. One is, a number of those social movements have been not movements of majorities. The abolitionists were not a majority at any point in time. And so, it does seem to me that the social movements inside themselves have to constantly think about the rights of minorities in the social movements and to consider that problem of the tyranny of the majority. On the other hand, my own sense is that the social movements have had a better record on preventing the tyranny of the majority inside the social movements than have most elite, dominant institutions in kinds of ways, partly because I think the ethos of the social movements has been an ethos of solidarity, an ethos, in a sense, of what liberation theology would call that preferential option for the poor. And so, even when they go against that, they can be held accountable, precisely because of that rhetoric. On Cromwell—in fact, the people I cited were the people that Cromwell put down—the democratic opposition and the losers to the Cromwellian revolution and the imperial thing. And the history of many revolutions are complex. I'd even use a word that gets very much used by contemporary theorists of democratic capitalism, taking it from Schumpeter—you all read, I think, the chapters on this. Creative destruction. Capitalism is a great thing because it's out there creatively destroying stuff. Well, it does seem to me that, in fact, revolutionary moments have that kind of creative destruction and I would, in fact, in many ways, think more about the destruction on both sides and worry about that creation. So I'm not sure that there are other accounts where the tyranny . . . What's the major episode of the tyranny of the majority in American history? One would say, fairly simply, it is basically the segregation, second class citizenship, and exploitation of black Americans. And then you would have to say, look historically at who was battling to break that down and who was working. I think if you look at the historical record, I think you'll find it was the social movements that are out there—not always at every point of time, but if it becomes less an abstraction in the sense of, yes, one of the crucial elements is if there is a people that has been ethnicized and racialized and put in a particular situation, that is a crucial one. But, again, I think the social movements are the places where the rights of those peoples who have been

ethnicized and racialized have been most thought about, even when the social movements were small minorities, like the abolitionists.

Q Just a quick follow-up. Would you draw a distinction then between social movements and populist working class movements more broadly?

MD Yes, in some ways. Populism is an interesting phrase. It does seem to me that, by the time one invents mass parliamentary politics—whatever it is, in the late 19th or early 20th century—everyone is a populist. It's impossible not to be a populist and to compete for political power. And so populism is such a weird kind of word. Everyone is speaking for the people by that time. And it's one reason why, I guess, the vocabulary of populism drops out. When the American Populists and the People's Party and all of that were put together, that was kind of the end of that 19th century sense of the democracy. And one of the markers of that end is the beginning of a sort of new, mass media driven politics—the McKinley campaign of '96 is often taken as one of the earliest versions of that new kind of politics. The appeal to the people is something that's made by all different kinds of politicians. So I would want to separate, indeed, the social movements in that sense of the kind of broad movements for democracy, for emancipation, that I identified -- and I think the history is fairly straightforward to tell of that -- from any invocation of populism. Because there have certainly been a number of authoritarian and dictatorial populisms.

Q What I'm about to say might get me into a lot of trouble. So before I say anything, I want to say that I'm not anti-union in any sense of the imagination, but I do want to ask . . . It seems like you point to a lot of problems with inequality with democracy towards bureaucrats, managers, people in the upper class, and specifically their weakening of unions, as a problem of inequality in democracy in America. I would like to offer another suggestion which is that the unions have become part of the problem as much as they should be a solution. My experience with some unions—I don't mean to make a blanket statement—but a lot of unions I have been familiar with, I feel are disjointed from the workers they represent. In particular, my mom works in a garment factory in New York and I feel like her union is not representing her and a lot of my mom's colleagues feel that way as well. I also got in trouble with the union. They threatened to take away my scholarship money when I wrote an article about how the union should not be fighting free trade. My mom made me promise that I would never talk about the unions again but I guess I broke that promise. In any case, what my mom feels about the union, what many of her colleagues feel about the unions, I feel a lot of workers feel that way about the union leadership—that they're out there to spend millions of dollars just to give out as campaign contributions or to spend it to fight free trade or relations with China instead of actually working to fight for better working conditions or to raise wages or to lower hours. And, in that sense, they have become just as much of the problem as all the other factions who are unsympathetic to the concerns of workers.

MD Let me say a couple of things on that. First, I'd be happy to write a letter to that union defending your right for that scholarship. Don't get me wrong. There are plenty of problems with any number of unions in the United States and around the world right

now. And it seems to me that the struggle for democracy inside unions is one that is being fought by members of those unions all over the place. Let me just say, just step back to the first thing that I was trying to argue on Tuesday, and then address some of your issues. The only thing I was trying to argue there is, regardless of all the negative things about unions, workers have a human right—everyone, according to the UN declarations, has a right to organize unions, to bargain collectively, and to strike. Those are rights and if the people want to exercise it—I did not speak for any particular union at that point—but if people want to exercise that right, they have that right. And on the side of democracy, one has to stand for that. On the other hand, it is clear that unions are as flawed as other institutions of civil society. There are some interesting controls on them. I do think—and I'll stand by my argument—maybe someone can come up—the only one I could really think about would be the churches, but I don't think it's true of the churches. I think unions remain the most democratic institution of civil society. It's hard to come up with something else out there that is more democratic. There are democratic controls. Partly, they are internal because of the ethos. Partly, they are fought because there are people that are fighting in the union to keep the leaders and the union bureaucracies honest in various ways—honest in a whole mess of senses. Partly, it's because of U.S. labor laws. Ron Carey was unseated from the presidency of the Teamsters for violations of campaign laws. Had they policed the presidency of the United States as well as they police the presidency of the Teamsters, we would have lost probably the last four or five American presidents—that's how tight the controls are over union democracy. Which is not to say that there aren't a lot of violations that need to be thought about. But I will stand by the sense that I think unions are the most democratic institution of civil society.

The second issue—which is a much more difficult issue and I know any number of people who are here face this—is that because unions are self organization of workers, it is very difficult—it's true of any institution—to pass that on to other workers that haven't been part of the self organization. And one of the remarkable things about capitalism is that it constantly remakes the working class. It's not like there is an American working class. It's made at one point and then, because of migration, changes of industry, it's entirely different. A generation later, it's ethnically different, nationally different, the ratio of men and women are different, the ratio of old and young are different, and that creates powerful things. I was doing a lecture earlier today on precisely this in the 1940s. Because of the migration of black and white southerners—massive migration, millions of them during World War II—to the war plants, the unions that had been created as the representatives of the CIO working class, those Jewish, Polish, Italian American workers who created the CIO unions in the '30s were often experienced as not our representatives. They had to fight inside those unions. Sometimes they fought against them. That was a moment of tremendous battle—not because of the limits of unions but because there were new people in the work force and there were battles that were taking place. So one of the things to think about when thinking about unions, one of the differences between them and bowling leagues—as I said—is that they're semi-voluntary things. When you're working in a work place, you generally don't get to choose who's working next to you. The employer makes that choice, and then you have to forge some kind of alliance with those people that are working with you. And so, when one comes into a work place, sometimes it can seem

that the union is as much a part of the machinery of discipline as is the rest of it. And so there has to be a constant battle to reorganize. That's true of Yale. That's why, indeed, there's a whole set of rituals every year to bring in a new freshman class and make them feel like they're Yale. And institutions have to do that and be able to pass that on. Unions have had a hard time because they don't get to select always. And some unions—particularly the older craft unions—tried to do that, tried to actually select, to pass it on, like Yale. They tried to be like Yale and have legacies and think that, if I'm a union carpenter, my son should be a union carpenter. I have nothing to pass on besides that. And that's why those apprenticeship programs and things became very powerful. You can understand that in some ways. But in most cases, and particularly in the big industrial unions, the new auto workers were coming from a whole different state, a whole different country. The plant was moving across. And whenever thinking about the history of unions, I think one has to think about that remaking of working people that takes place all the time.

Q Thank you. Let me add one quick comment, if you please. Several faculty I've spoken to have told me that they've stayed out of the GESO debate because they don't want to get in trouble with the bureaucracy or with the graduate students. That said, I was a little disturbed when I heard one of the past DeVane lecturers say, after your speech, that he or she did not take any stance in the GESO debate and that he or she was very upset that you said that aside from Dean Kronman they had all spoken out against unions. I don't mean to take sides in this debate. I understand there's a very powerful effect of pointing a finger at someone...

AK I think, as a general matter, it's best that people speak for themselves and declare their own views and let others represent their views in turn.

Q At the beginning, you mentioned several things that, in your opinion, were necessary to be provided to people in order for a society to function as a democratic society, like education or medical care or whatever. Do you think that, at the present, in America at least, access to the Internet might be one of those things?

MD Yes. I don't have lots of theories about the Internet or anything like that, but it does seem to me that that is clearly moving toward something that they speak of as the "digital divide." It's clearly an international case where there are whole continents that seem out on the other side of that digital divide. And insofar as that becomes a crucial, productive force in the world, I think would be perfectly the case. I think that's the explanation, in fact, for the Luddites and the saboteurs of the new technology—like the "I Love You" virus is an expression of that digital divide.

AK If we could switch back, just for a moment, from civil society and the world of work, in particular, to the political realm, one question I'd like you to say a few words about is this: there are, in our American constitutional democracy, elements quite deliberately introduced into that system of a relatively undemocratic nature—at least, so they were understood and conceived and intended by the framers of the Constitution. The Senate is one example. The Supreme Court is the most striking and durable example of an element that some legal theorists call counter-majoritarian. But what

they really mean is undemocratic. Now, it's true that the justices of the Supreme Court are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate and so our elected representatives do have the ultimate say over the composition of the court. But at the end of the day, these nine men and women, members of this extraordinarily elite institution, insulated from the pressures of politics, and from social and political movements of all sorts, have the power to make decisions that potentially can upset or reverse or undo the work of the people as conducted through their representatives, and sometimes this has been a wonderfully progressive force and sometimes, quite the opposite. The history of the Supreme Court over the whole 220 years of its existence has been a mixed one. Ought the Supreme Court to be democratized? For example, we could have justices appointed for a term of years and stand for national election every 12 years or every 15 years, and put the power in the hands of the people directly to compose the Court and adjust its membership. That would be, in one very obvious sense, a step toward the democratization of a strikingly undemocratic element in our political system. Would that be a good thing or a bad thing?

MD Can I avoid that entirely? Partly because I feel like I'm not . . . We have many wonderful scholars of the Constitution and all of that. I am not one of those. Though, in general, I would tend to think there are those undemocratic aspects of the Constitutional order, but the politics of changing the Constitution have seemed so outside the realm of possibility that the only Constitutional thing that I've ever taken that much interest in is the possibilities of proportional representation, proportional voting, in order to build more political parties. I do think that one of the elements of the democracy is the possibility of having political parties that were real political parties and that could argue for different kinds of points of view. And so I'm more interested in those sorts of things. But I guess that insofar as the social movements, at the present, have not put elections of Supreme Court justices on the table, I haven't thought too much about them and my ideas are probably no better than anybody else's here.

Q ... I was struck by Dean Kronman's use of the term "non-governmental" when you were speaking earlier about institutions like universities and private businesses and so forth, particularly in light of Professor Denning's comments on Tuesday about the shrinking of the range of options that are open to democratic process as the franchise was expanded. Because any time I hear the term nongovernmental in relation to the institutions you were talking about, I immediately think, well, non-electoral, but, in fact, institutions such as those are so thoroughly dependent on other organs of the state—the creation of the legal fiction of the corporate citizen, the backing up of the legal protections with the coercive power of the state—that I was interested to invite, perhaps, Professor Denning to talk about the historical moment of those changes as well in the light of the increasing franchise. Is that specific enough to get you going?

MD I'll try. One of the strange issues in thinking this through is kind of a conceptual issue about what's the whole space and what does it look like? For instance, it's very common, in most of the debates about globalization to hear rattled around, "the state" and "the market." Those are the two worlds and so the question is, is there any place outside the state and the market. If you're in the state, are you in the market? If you're not in the state, you're in the market and vice versa? How do you draw that line?

Another way to see it is the famous long tradition of state and civil society which, again, what exactly is civil society? And I think it's hard for us to imagine a kind of public sphere—the Habermasian version of attempting to think exactly that. Some kind of space that's not the state and state apparatuses and the state intervention in our lives in all sorts of ways from registering our marriages and our kids and educating them and on up, or the market things where, essentially, we're buying and selling ourselves and other goods. And the question of whether there is some kind of voluntary space that's not that is a conundrum that I can't solve. . . I wrote a little piece about Yale a few years back, trying to think about this. Is Yale part of the state? In lots of ways, it looks really like, *de facto*, a part of the state apparatus. There's all kinds of state money that comes into it. That's what funds the place. For all practical purposes, this is a public institution that's part of that state apparatus. Is it part of the market? Well, it calls itself the Yale Corporation. It always seemed to me odd. Most universities have trustees or something. But what is that middle space? Is it of the foundations, the voluntary, the non-profit, and is there a place for that in a way. And it does seem to me, unions are sort of in that middle space, which is why I'm interested in it. And it kind of breaks up. This is not really an answer but a thinking through of the difficulty that I've had in even dividing that up and trying to understand the relations between those different spheres of life. One of the reasons this is a vital issues is one of the strongest socialist critiques of the communist regimes was that they allowed the state to take over all of life, that once you had eliminated the market, you had nothing left but the state. So that's why these are significant issues. If that is the case, then the arguments for democratic capitalism might make more sense. That's why we have to have markets because, otherwise, it's all going to be state. And I guess I do think there is some kind of realm, which is neither state nor market, that is the realm of association in a kind of Tocquevillian sense, that really is the realm of where we live daily life. The family is another place that fits in that. What is the place of the household, if it's a battle between state and market? How does one understand households which are deeply implicated in both the state and the market, particularly since so much of child care, preparation of food, all of that has been commercialized over the last 100 years to a degree that I think people 150 years ago would be amazed at.

Q Just one bit of trivia and then a question on a different topic. If I remember correctly, the Progressives, on the eve of World War I, did, indeed, advocate the democratic election of judges and I believe that that was part of Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose platform when he ran for President in 1912, as somebody who was relatively more progressive than either Wilson or Taft. The question I had concerned something different and that is the ideal of the redistribution of time. I should explain that, over the course of my life, I've worked on both blue collar and white collar jobs and what I see is that, in society today, it's probably a lot more complex than just the factories with child labor owned by absentee or idle manager. What I see is a fairly widespread managerial class that works quite a bit harder in terms of long hours than most members of the working class and sometimes I think to myself—I happen to work in a white collar capacity—that I had thought that involuntary servitude had been abolished until I look at all the things that I have to do. And I have relatives in the construction trade on both management and labor. And the managers work harder in terms of longer hours than those who are involved on the labor side. What we really

have is a disparity in the whole working system where pleasant work and interesting work pays better—in fact, a lot better than really unpleasant and degrading work. I worked in college for a while, lifting bricks on trucks at minimum wage. I could not have done that, even at the age of 19, much more than 40 hours a week. I mean, it was really debilitating work. Now, I work, normally, a lot longer than that but it's interesting work. And it seems to me that part of our challenge is not just to reduce working hours for people who are doing really hard, physically debilitating work, because I think that that is an important value, but also to confront the situation that we have where, as I said, really hard debilitating work pays a lot less than pleasant and enjoyable and interesting work. So I'll let you address that.

MD And maybe it's a moment to recommend to you again to take a look at the Human Rights Report on workers in the U.S. because they address both sides of this. In some ways, some of the workers who are least protected by the law are the ones who are still doing that very difficult, very hot, very dangerous work that some versions of the post-industrial economy would lead us to think doesn't exist anymore. It does exist and, indeed, those sweat shops and child labor—if not in the United States, not too far across the borders—continues to exist. On the other hand, the white collar thing is also addressed and particularly the issue of managers. One of the interesting arguments throughout that is that the managerial category has been abused precisely in order to prevent people who are employees of some employer, who are not themselves—as that line said—who would have no one to bargain with because they would have to bargain with themselves, -- but who have various forms of managerial or supervisory work inside large institutions and corporations and that they should have and are excluded from the protections of organization. And one of the strong arguments through that is, indeed, so that they can have some kind of control over precisely hours, conditions of work, they should have the right also to organize and associate and bargain collectively. And that a large part of the people that the Human Rights Watch Report says are not covered by the law are people who are defined as managers in that kind of a way.

Q Sir, in your talk on Tuesday, as I recall, you made two critical remarks in reference to Madison and Hamilton. You didn't elucidate. I would like to have your reasons today why you criticize Madison and Hamilton. Thank you.

MD I guess two reasons—and I have not done a substantial account of Madison and Hamilton or whatever, but the two reasons really were, Madison and Hamilton and the other U.S. Constitutionalists are taken as, somehow, the inventors of democracy. And whatever their other virtues are, I think that does not stand to the historical record. I think that they, themselves, wanted to invent a state that insulated political power from the populace . . . They were republicans in the small “r” sense of that. They were constitutionalists, and in many ways were path breaking figures for the late 18th century in terms of the elite political opinion, by far. On the other hand, the forces of the democracy in the 18th century, I think, are much more held by those plebian levelers and commoners, rebellious slaves who really did imagine some other kind of thing. So that was the reason. I guess the other reason was just to underline—it wasn't meant. . . It was an aside against Hamilton and Madison, and maybe it's because I teach

American Studies, but I think it's also because I live in America. There is a sense in this country, I think, that democracy is like Coke. It was invented in America and then exported out, and the rest of the world are grateful to have it. And that Hamilton and Madison and the people more to my taste, like Jefferson who I didn't put in that camp or whatever, cannot be seen as just the people who thought this up. A proper history of the democracy, I think, would see a very different kind of genealogy of that democracy...The United States is important to it—don't get me wrong. And I think I did try to place the revolt in the 1770s of the North Atlantic Colonies in North America against the English Empire in the context of a series of other revolts that took part against those great empires that had been built—the Spanish Empire and the English Empire at that time. But I think that we should step back from the kind of arrogance that I find in that little piece by Gordon Wood that's in your pamphlet—and I quote it a little bit—that “Americans invented democracy and gave it to the world.” So that was the reason for the slight on Hamilton and Madison.

Q I'm sorry I disagree with you, and I think most historians do. But at least my reading of history, and I think they were great creators and builders and we owe a lot to them. And your remarks just struck me as being very odd and very wrong.

Q I'm interested in globalization and, specifically, the conflict between globalization and democracy. The most recent example of this would be, for instance, the free trade area of the Americas or FTAA which is the extension of NAFTA throughout the western hemisphere. And very few people have even heard of this and the text of it is not open to the public, or even members of Congress—just to a few trade and finance ministers and multi-national corporations. So I wondered if you could reflect on how globalization is an antidemocratic process and also speak a little bit about how and why people should oppose or resist this process.

MD I'll try two quick answers to that. The first one is just a thought on a way to re-think, perhaps, or put in a different set in your mind that battle between state and market that gets written somehow—state and capital—and some people argue that the states are sort of withering away, no longer have power. It does seem to me there's a double kind of sense. On the one hand, states are probably more powerful toward their citizens than ever before in world history and so it's still, if you don't have passports and proper citizenship papers or whatever, you lack lots of the rights in the world. States remain very powerful that way though, on the other hand, it seems clear—and the WTO and the IMF, I think, are examples of that, that states have lost tremendous power *vis a vis* capital. And so that one of the reasons for the destruction of social democracy has it basically that the IMF and the World Bank and the WTO have tried to eliminate that. And from the late '70s on there are the austerity programs, structural adjustment—there are a number of names for that—were interventions where loans to various governments around the world and other sorts of financial help were premised upon cutting price supports, cutting social programs, cutting various sorts of income security. And that seems to me, not just because they are undemocratic in the parliamentary sense—we don't vote for the IMF or the WTO because they are destroying the democratic state in that larger sense of the democratic state. Second point on the opposition, which I've got to be very brief because the most recent essay, other than

this, that I have written is a kind of thinking about the social movement and how do we understand the social movement whose hydra head popped up in Seattle last fall—a year ago in November. In Venezuela, a whole set of them in the late '70s that can go through the 1980s—I can't do the whole thing here—there were sort of ups and downs—that is marked, I think, internationally by the Zapatista Revolt in, I guess, January of 1994, which was precisely against neo-liberalism, quite different than, say, the peasant guerilla movements in the Third World and in Latin America of the 1960s—a different form of organization, a different imagination. And it does seem to me, one part of my sense of hopefulness is that, over 20 years in different kinds of places, there has been a remarkable movement against globalization. And it came home to roost in the United States only very late. And I think—and I can't really do that in this time, but I try in the longer essay -- I think that one can see the emergence of and the breakdown...It destabilized states on the left and the right so that it was this movement and those forces that destabilized the apartheid states of South Africa and enabled the ANC to come into power, but it was also that that destabilized the goulash communism of Hungary and Poland which had depended, in part, on large social benefits in order to legitimate those states and then, when they started cutting those back in the late '70s and early '80s, under direct pressure from the IMF, is one of the things that generated those new democratic movements against the Polish and Hungarian regimes. And so that's a very quick kind of thing . . .

AK If I could just add one thought here. The concerns, fears, anxieties about the World Bank and the IMF are motivated by an understandable wish to restore accountability in an area in which people feel it slipping away—ordinary citizens around the world increasingly feel that their fates are hostage to a world market whose architecture has been constructed and is being administered by institutions that are invisible to them, inaccessible to them, and not accountable to them and that leaves many people feeling that their fates and fortunes—how life goes for them—will be determined by institutions over which they have no power or control, and that, I think, can fairly be described as a democracy deficit. But on the other hand, globalization has given the international human rights movement greater force and credibility and the proposition that governments around the world are now accountable to the international community for their own internal human rights abuses which were previously invisible, often within the country and almost always outside of it, is a proposition that has a great deal of force to it. Even if there is no international mechanism for the enforcement of human rights around the world, the detection and publication of abuses is a powerful engine, I would say, of a democracy-enhancing kind. And so you have a very mixed bag of consequences, some of which have the effect of reducing accountability and others of increasing accountability in a different dimension and how this all adds up and fits together and how the pieces are to be integrated is a very complicated and uncertain business.

Q Professor Denning, I want to raise an issue. It started when I was hearing your talk and I kept thinking about my home town which is not a rich town and my friends parents from home, who are mostly working class and not very rich, and yet also pretty Republican and conservative and wouldn't have agreed with a word you said. This is Fairbanks, Alaska. It's a really conservative state. As I left, I thought about a remark

that an older friend made to me. He had been to a lot of these DeVane lectures and he said, "Boy, the last time I heard about redistribution was in college from my sociology professor. Nobody has talked about it in the last twenty years, in my ordinary adult life." And then I remembered Ian Shapiro's talk about how most of America is not for redistribution. They don't vote for it. And some statistics that 8 or 9 out of 10 Americans—it was 8 out of 10 whites and 9 out of 10 blacks—believe in the American dream and they say so in these polls. And it started to put your movement, your beliefs, your whole support of "the democracy" in a different light. Instead of looking like it was working on behalf of the oppressed majorities, it really started to look like a radicalized minority led by academics with violent fantasies and supported by groups of workers who had been brought under their sort of Marxist veil. But not something that worked, in any sense, on behalf of . . . It was something that wasn't just not parliamentary democracy, but it wasn't democratic at all, just wasn't representing what the majority thought or felt.

MD That's a good point. Not to characterize you, but I think that could be claimed that that is the conservative characterization of the left in general—it's precisely that. I would say two things to that. One, I would make a distinction—and you should divide my own thoughts in this—between the social movements and particular ideologies within those social movements. So that I do think—and I would take issue with some of those figures—well, we could go back to polls and whatever. But I think that the historical record would show—certainly through the 20th century—that American citizens who were working in various kinds of industries or offices tend to be extremely militant about their own interests and their own desires for a kind of democracy and that the support for kinds of redistributive things, I think, is very strong. . . . I think of the work that Joel Rogers and Thomas Ferguson did in a book called *Right Turn* which was an attempt to actually argue that the turn to the right in the '80s, under Reagan, was not represented in the polling data, that there was not the kind of right turn in popular opinion on those sorts of economic issues that the Reagan administration and the conservative position had held there. On the other hand, I will be the first to admit that that part of the social movement—that one part which has been intellectually very influential—the socialist traditions, the Marxist traditions have waxed and waned around the world and in different parts of the world, particularly in the United States. One reason I remain part of that tradition and think of it that way is because it is an international vocabulary. It's one of the few vocabularies of emancipation and liberation that does not see its particular nation as the chosen people, unlike certain other vocabularies in that way, and that is shared across. So there are remarkable forms of Marxism that are African Marxisms, Asian Marxisms, and the remarkable thing is that, in the 20th century, it even broke out of its European centeredness. Now, those are spoken in very different dialects but for someone who works and lives and acts politically in the United States, I find it important to keep in touch with that vocabulary of emancipation around the world outside, even though I know, at this particular moment, it looks like a tremendous minority and it does seem to me that one of the tasks of socialist intellectuals is to try to keep that alive, to keep that argument in there . . . I don't know how many of you went through the list of the readings that you have in this democracy thing, but besides the Therborn piece, how many other pieces would be written, and there's probably a couple others written by people who would characterize

themselves as some part of that Marxist tradition, but not that many, I would guess. But I've never thought that the kind of statistical . . . The sense of history . . . history is a becoming, the social movement is a becoming. Americans right now are very different than what they were ten years ago or what they might be ten years hence. There were people—I remember this—people who thought there was no possibility—in 1977-'78—that Polish solidarity would actually not only thrive, but bring a government down. I've seen revolutions in my day in that kind of way. Change does take place. Dramatic change takes place. It's not always one damned thing after another. And sometimes I think that it's worth thinking that through. And that change is made by ordinary people. A book that I didn't put on the list, but it's really important one, is the sociologist of social movements, Richard Flax who's out in the University of California, *Making History*, who argues the way to really understand power is that there are some people . . . powerful people are those people who can make history going about their daily lives. If you're an investment banker, even if you're just a banker in a town, you make decisions that affect people's lives profoundly, and the more power you have, the more the decisions you make in your 9-5 job affect more and more people's lives. Less powerful people affect a smaller number of people's lives. They affect the lives of their children, the lives of the people in their immediate family, but not much more than that. He argues that, in fact, the reason social movements are so important is because they are a way in which people who do not make history by simply going to work, in the time outside of work, by uniting together, can make history. And his account which is based on a history of the democratic social movements, particularly the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Movement, the Labor Movement, is an account of precisely how people who don't determine other people's lives to a great degree in their daily life are, by coming together, and why it's so difficult to hold it together, because they have to do it outside the 9-5 jobs; whereas the people who are protesting in the street in Seattle have to make the effort to get there and get out of work and all that. The WTO ministers, they're just doing their job and at 5:00 they'll go to the restaurant. And I think that's one of the most interesting and powerful . . . And I raise it partly because I would put it against some of the civic participation literature that comes out of Political Science, which has its interest—and you had one of those assigned this week -- in a way, but which is all about kind of participating in groups and all of this but it doesn't have any of the sort of thickness of the Flax view of how ordinary people can make history by organizing in social movements.

Q Could I follow up? I'm not sure I totally understand your answer, so I just want to see if I can simplify it, for my sake. So I characterized "the democracy" as a radicalized minority, a radical leftist minority, and I guess I expected you to say, "Well, that's inaccurate because it's not a minority, or it's not so radical." Or I expected you to say that it is, maybe, a radical minority by today's standards but we've got to lead people in such a way—those of us in that group—that's it not a radical minority anymore, that it becomes a majority, an accepted position. Are you saying one of those two things?

MD I'm trying to say, both. I do think that the democracy—if you look at it historically—is one (I don't know whether it ever gets to majorities) of large numbers of people, our mass movements. On the other hand, the part of the mass movement that is self identified as the left, and keeping certain kinds of traditions of the left together,

the parts—for instance, you could see it in the Women’s Movement—the Women’s Movement was clearly a mass movement that involved all sorts of ordinary women. The people who were feminist activists were a militant minority in various kinds of ways. And so it does seem to me it’s important to see both sides of that so as not to extrapolate from the particular views of the activist, the intellectuals, who, in some ways, are the organizers--those kinds of people—it’s the same thing that you see that to the mass movement. But on the other hand, I think it would be hard to explain this history if one didn’t recognize that the movement, when it was successful, was a mass movement. Part of that battle is always to build that movement, to organize, to get more people connected to it.

AK Thank you, Michael. We are at an end. I would like to thank Professor Denning for being with us today and I will see all of you next Tuesday when my Law School colleague, Bruce Ackerman, will be lecturing. Thanks very much.