Spring 1991

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Lynne Henderson

Indiana University School of Law

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Authoritarianism and the Rule of Law

LYNNE HENDERSON*

INTRODUCTION

Erwin Chemerinsky began his foreword to the 1989 Harvard Law Review's Supreme Court issue with the statement "[b]y any standard, the 1988-1989 Supreme Court Term was momentous." And it is not difficult to justify his characterization or an accompanying concern about a dramatic shift in constitutional adjudication in the United States when viewing the Court's term, which "narrowed abortion rights, limited government affirmative action programs, restricted the scope of civil rights laws, permitted capital punishment of juveniles and the mentally retarded, approved drug testing and constricted the availability of habeas corpus."2

While many liberal-progressive constitutional scholars have noted the "conservative" shift in the Court's decisions and are voicing concern and proposing alternative strategies,3 it is the thesis of this Article that the problem is authoritarianism, not conservatism per se.4 While conservatism may mean a sense of caution or a respect for tradition that is not absolute or inflexible,5 authoritarianism represents inflexibility and oppression.

* Professor of Law, Indiana University School of Law at Bloomington. I thank Paul Brest, Donald Ehrman and Robin West for their help and encouragement, as well as their patience with my kvetching, throughout the writing of this article. I also want to express my gratitude to Jost Delbrück, Don Gjerdingen, Marjorie Kornhauser, Robert Wesberg and Frank Michelman for their interest, time and help with various drafts, and to Lauren Robel for giving me a central, clarifying insight. The article benefitted enormously in its early stages from comments made by the participants in the University of Texas Faculty Workshop and an Indiana University colloquium. Finally, I am grateful to the Cleveland-Marshall fund for supporting the initial research for the article.

2. Id. Although this Article does not seek to defend the proposition, it may be that we are at the juncture of another of Professor Ackerman's "transformative" constitutional moments, a kind of critical realignment in the Court's constitutional decisionmaking as a result of changes in the federal judiciary. Ackerman, Constitutional Politics/Constitutional Law, 99 Yale L.J. 453, 545 (1989).
Consistent with authoritarianism, much of the Court’s jurisprudence in the last few years appears to manifest inflexibility, lack of compassion, and approval of oppression. Indeed, during the past decade, there has been an increasing concern about the growth of right-wing authoritarianism in the United States: The American political turn to the right in the 1980s, together with the resurgence of active manifestations of racism, anti-semitism and nativism, provide reason to consider authoritarianism and its relation to law. This Article argues that there has been a parallel increase in authoritarianism in legal thought and judicial practice in the United States during this same period that should be of great concern to those who view law as an institution for human progress.

Recently, the words “authoritarian” and “authoritarianism” have frequently appeared in legal scholarship. After the Supreme Court’s decision in *Bowers v Hardwick,* several scholars expressed open concern about the Court’s decision, noting that it was authoritarian both in its reasoning and its result. But thus far, it does not appear that scholars have examined

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10. West, *Authoritarian Impulse,* supra note 8; Michelman, *Law’s Republic,* supra note 8, at 1494-99. This use of the word “authoritarian” may reflect the concerns of liberal-progressive scholars with the Reagan administration’s political agenda of reconstituting the federal judiciary to conform to a particular “conservative” political vision. The lack of sympathy for progressive or liberal legal arguments a number of the new judges have manifested has reinforced these concerns. Charles Reich has written:

Recent decisions by the Supreme Court mark the rise of an authoritarian jurisprudence—authoritarian in its processes and in the results. This authoritarian jurisprudence is consistent with the goals pursued for the last eight years by the Reagan Administration: to select for the federal bench only those judicial candidates with a demonstrated lack of empathy, absence of understanding of or sympathy for the powerless, and a consciousness that is narrowly limited to their own position in the social hierarchy.

*Reich,* supra note 8, at 80. Brisbin has also criticized the statism of the Reagan judiciary. *Brisbin,* supra note 4, at 528.

The rise in concern about authoritarianism does appear to correspond to changes in the
the significance of authoritarianism as a separate influence on law and legal thinking. Accordingly, this Article explores authoritarianism in detail, examining the ways in which legal thought and constitutional jurisprudence in particular serve to reinforce authoritarianism, while also being authoritarian in their own right. It seeks to describe and explore current authoritarian manifestations in American constitutional law, as embodied in legal scholarship and decisions of the Supreme Court. This Article assumes that, for the most part, our practice includes deference and obedience to the authority of judicial decisions, as well as reliance on them in political discourse, and that accordingly, these decisions can and do play a role in the creation and support of authoritarianism. Because the judiciary plays a significant role in determining who "loses his freedom, his property, his children, even his life," because the focus of much legal scholarship is on the courts, and because what judges decide counts as law, this Article will focus on legal scholarship about the judiciary and its relation to authoritarianism, examining authoritarian models of judicial decisionmaking in terms of both process and substance.

Although there is considerable literature on authority, legal authority and "legitimate" authority, \(^1\) \(^3\) Anglo-American jurisprudential and legal literature concerning authoritarianism itself appears to be sparse; authoritarianism is often viewed as the opposite of authority. Rather than struggle to properly define what authority is, this Article argues that it may be more useful to consider what authoritarianism—generally viewed as a perversion of...
“Authoritarian” and “authoritarianism” do not mean conservative, right-wing, fascist or communist; rather, these words describe a continuum of relationships to, and uses of, authority. Authoritarianism may simply mean unquestioning obedience to authority, “blind” obedience, or, as Hannah Arendt defined the term, obedience to traditionally constituted authorities out of an attitude of acceptance. But authoritarian and authoritarianism also are used to describe personal epistemologies and political structures and practices that are directly threatening to human freedom and dignity. Legal scholars may have had this substantive meaning in mind when they referred to the Court’s decisions as authoritarian.

Substantive authoritarianism means opposition to the “liberal” values of tolerance of ambiguity and difference, insistence on obedience to rules, insistence on conformity, and use of coercion and punishment to ensure that obedience. Frequently associated with xenophobic nationalism or ethnocentrism, authoritarianism in the substantive sense is premised on a suspicious and distrustful view of human nature and is frequently linked, both on a personal and political level, to racism, anti-semitism and patriarchy. Substantive authoritarianism oppresses in the name of order and control. This form of authoritarianism may reach the extreme level it did in Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia or appear in milder forms, as it did during the McCarthy era in the United States, when, as a result of fear, hatred and extreme nationalism, the government, with private and judicial support, used law to persecute and punish citizens for being “un-American.”

Authoritarianism need not be based only in active coercion and oppression of disfavored groups by government. The government may also allow authoritarianism to flourish by omission—by permitting other institutions or persons to coerce and oppress others in the interest of maintaining control. Thus, much of the history of slavery in the United States could be characterized as government authoritarianism by omission in the interests

of maintaining order and national and party unity. Other examples include the government largely ignoring oppression of and violence against African-American women, and a long history of governmental tolerance of private oppression of women and children through violence.

Because law is a major tool of social and political power, and because it is the primary instrument for a government to legitimate itself and accomplish its objectives, law is vulnerable to "capture" for substantively authoritarian purposes. Law may always be authoritarian in the formal sense, because a major premise of law is that people will accept and obey it absent some extraordinary justification. Yet, a jurisprudential preoccupation with the duty to obey law and the authority of law overlook law's tendency to validate and facilitate oppression and violence, whether by the state directly or by private actors with tacit state approval. Judges may participate in authoritarian uses of law by unquestioning obedience to rule and other authorities, by using stereotypical reasoning, by upholding the status quo and hypostatizing power relationships, and by taking a punishing attitude towards disobedience. As Robert Cover noted and David Luban recently argued, the Supreme Court, in the case of Walker v. City of Birmingham, 21. For an excellent summary of the interests in avoiding confrontations over slavery and of the omissions to do anything to end the practice within the context of racism and xenophobia, see J. McPherson, BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM 490-510 (1988).


25. As examples of the continuing argument that people must obey the law absent some extraordinary reason, see K. GREENAWALT, CONFLICTS OF LAW AND MORALITY (1987); Soper, supra note 24, at 212-13, 224, 229 (suggesting it is moral to obey the law); see also Henderson, Whose Nature? Practical Reason and Patriarchy, 38 CLEV. ST. L. REV. _____ (1990) (forthcoming) [hereinafter Henderson, Whose Nature?] (discussing John Finnis' theory of the morality of obedience to authority).

26. For articles describing authoritarian judicial practices, see Luban, supra note 8; Forbath, supra note 11; Cover, The Supreme Court, 1982 Term—Foreword: Nomos and Narrative, 97 HARV. L. REV. 4 (1983) [hereinafter Cover, Nomos and Narrative]. Robert Gordon has written in a humorous way that late nineteenth century legal scholars somehow persuaded themselves that the legal reinforcement of free contracting did not implicate the coercive power of the state. Of course a party who relies on legal enforcement is not engaging in a private transaction in the sense that an agreement to have lunch is a private transaction. If things go wrong, he hopes to have the option of having his interpretation of the deal backed up by state force—up to and including the 101st Airborne Division or National Guard if defendant resists enforcement.


engaged in authoritarian decisionmaking by holding that civil rights marchers could be punished for disobeying an injunction the Court had declared unconstitutional. Professor Luban concluded that the Court in *Walker*, "[facing a choice between the anti-authoritarian consequences of liberal constitutionalism and the overwhelming desire to maintain reverence for authority, .. opted for the latter."

With the decline of liberal thought and politics in the United States, much of the constitutional jurisprudence of the 1980s has become particularly facilitative of authoritarian uses of law by providing theoretical justifications for those uses. A distrust of judges and judicial power exercised in a certain liberating way has been the target of some "conservative" scholars. Thus, arguments by conservative constitutional scholars invariably seek to curtail the ability of judges to interpret positive law by demanding obedience to law, narrowly defined. The demand on the part of some scholars for strict adherence to original intent, obedience to text, deference to the political branches—particularly the executive branch—and strict fidelity to precedent and stare decisis, combined with arguments emphasizing stability, order, predictability and control, is especially troubling. To the extent that such positivist views of judging can be associated with authoritarian legal systems, these arguments can legitimate tyranny. To the extent that adherence to text and legislative command renders judges powerless to prevent legally constructed oppression or repression, the likelihood of formal authoritarianism in law, at a minimum, increases.

Other scholars make more substantively authoritarian arguments. Judge Posner's visions of human nature, law and the need for acceptance of authority have been criticized elsewhere as being authoritarian and will be criticized here as well. Additionally, some communitarian or civic republican scholars present the danger of substantive authoritarianism. For these scholars, community and public virtue take priority in law; one does not have to be an atomistic, selfish liberal to be concerned that arguments that the community takes precedence provide a justification for "aggressive


29. Although emphasis on obedience to rules or texts can sometimes restrain a judge from approving an authoritarian practice or reaching an authoritarian result, obedience to authority cannot be said to be neutral or even necessarily good. The outcome of obedience depends on the goodness or badness of the authority, the oppressive or liberating effects of a rule. For example, Justice Kennedy's concurrence in *Texas v. Johnson*, 109 S. Ct. 2533, 2548 (1989), professes obedience to precedent and the perceived command of the first amendment in reaching what could be considered a non-authoritarian result—concluding that a state cannot regulate or punish the political expression of burning the flag of the United States. But four other justices disagreed both as to the content of the rule and precedent and with the result. Rules and obedience will never bind judges in the way that many scholars assume, and arguments for obedience may be used to support authoritarian outcomes as easily as non-authoritarian outcomes. See *infra* notes 252-86 and accompanying text.

30. See *infra* notes 287-88.
majoritarianism\textsuperscript{31} and repressive, punitive or oppressive uses of law against outsiders.

There are, however, some avenues of scholarship that exist or are being explored which could combat the tendency to use law in authoritarian ways. In the conclusion of this Article, I will suggest that there are at least two major alternatives to authoritarian legal thought which are consistent both with legality and with humanitarian systems. My choice of these alternatives is based not only on the fact that they are at least descriptively and theoretically inconsistent with authoritarianism, but also on the existence of empirical evidence suggesting the value of these approaches in combatting authoritarianism. These two alternatives are the jurisprudence of strong rights and individual human dignity\textsuperscript{32} and the feminist/minority/humanist jurisprudence of understanding and care for others.\textsuperscript{33} These two orientations somewhat resemble the different models of moral decisionmaking developed by Kohlberg and Gilligan; rather than being seen as antagonistic, the models might very well be capable of combination, as suggested by the writings of some scholars.\textsuperscript{34} These approaches both share the similar concerns of valuing human beings and of resisting cruelty, subordination and oppression, in whatever guise.

I. AUTHORITARIANISM AND ITS RELATION TO LAW

This section examines authoritarianism in more detail and develops a description of authoritarianism in relation to law. It begins with a very brief summary of the literature on authority, noting that even in this literature the connection between authority and authoritarianism is often

\textsuperscript{31} This felicitous phrase is Suzanna Sherry's. See Sherry, Civic Virtue and the Feminine Voice in Constitutional Adjudication, 72 VA. L. REV. 543, 614 (1986).


\textsuperscript{33} While the ethic of care is associated with the work of feminist legal scholars, it is not confined to feminist jurisprudence. See, e.g., K. Karst, Belonging to America (1989); Bender, A Lawyer's Primer on Feminist Theory and Tort, 38 J. LEGAL EDUC. 3 (1988); Henderson, Legality and Empathy, 85 Mich. L. Rev. 1574 (1987) [hereinafter Henderson, Legality]; Minow, The Supreme Court, 1986 Term—Foreword: Justice Engendered, 101 HARV. L. REV. 10 (1987); West, Economic Man and Literary Woman: One Contrast, 39 MERCER L. REV. 367 (1988) [hereinafter West, One Contrast].

present. It then examines in more detail the literature on authoritarianism and begins to describe how the literature might relate to law. Next, the section examines more thoroughly the relation of authoritarianism to law, first generally and then through the writings of scholars who have been concerned with the relationship of law and authoritarianism.

A. Why Authority?

A posited human “need” for authority has led to numerous attempts to define or describe authority—hence, “legitimate” authority—and to distinguish it from authoritarianism. Yet, often unstated assumptions about human nature and the need for authority arising from those assumptions influence the definitions of authority used by scholars. These assumptions themselves may be based on authoritarian beliefs, and appear across a broad range of the literature on authority, including philosophy and the social sciences.

A common justification of the human need for authority relationships has been that of a parent to a child. Thus, a common argument for authority and the requirement of obedience to authority is that the child’s obedience to her parents is natural and essential for her well-being. As true as it is that young humans are neither physically nor cognitively able to survive by themselves in even simple worlds, an emphasis on the child’s obedience rather than on the parents’ nurturance and education of their children in itself manifests an authoritarian view of human nature. As the child grows older and develops cognitive, experiential and emotional skills, absolute obedience to parental authority is neither biologically required nor healthy for the child in a liberal democratic society. The wise parent recognizes the developing child and loosens the bonds of authority accordingly. The authoritarian family, as embodied in the classic Victorian patriarchal family, with its emphasis on the wicked child and obedience to a father who was a “full-bodied authoritarian, who took his particular morality very seriously and threatened and/or delivered extreme punishment for ‘moral’ waywardness” creates a rigid and punitive personal morality that emphasizes obedience to authority. Under the authoritarian view that stresses authority as primary in the family, the parents impose a narrow and conventional morality on the child. They are repressive, punitive and

35. See, e.g., R. Sennett, supra note 13, at 15; Arendt, supra note 16, at 81, 97.
37. A. Miller, For Your Own Good 4-6 (2d ed. 1984); E. Sagan, supra note 36, at 57. See generally Lifton & Strozier, Waiting for Armageddon, N.Y. Times, Aug. 12, 1990, § 7 (Book Review), at 1, col. 1.
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require absolute obedience to parental authority, whether it is for the child’s well-being or not. Tyrannizing children with physical punishments and refusing to recognize their individual humanity can render them incapable of individual moral autonomy and empathy for others, and may also increase their capability for cruelty to themselves and others.\(^3\)

The authoritarian parenting model hardly seems a worthy justification for a posited need for authority, although it might very well produce those prone to adopt authoritarian approaches to life. Similarly, the human search for, or belief in, a transcendental Being also has been posited as proof of a need for authority. Even if beliefs and religions serve a basic human desire for connection to a greater Being or reassurance against the anxiety of death and meaninglessness, those that terrorize their adherents by being rigid and punitive—authoritarian, in other words—do not, however, seem to merit emulation.

Nonetheless, it seems indisputable that these common authoritarian arrangements reinforce attitudes about the perceived need for authority. Although authoritarian backgrounds or religions can produce morally autonomous individuals, they are more likely to produce authoritarians who willingly obey rules, punish those who deviate from rules, and defend the primacy of authority for ordering human affairs. As a matter of speculation, the vast majority of us may have been sufficiently shaped by authoritarian upbringing and practices that we have all absorbed a belief in a natural human need for authority, at either a conscious or unconscious level. And, to the extent that we are shaped by a belief in the necessity of authority and are accustomed to authority, it may be difficult (if not impossible) to break away from thinking that something in human nature requires authority and punishment for defiance of authority.

Arendt made a different, more subtle argument about this posited need for authority that may capture another reason why we seek authority. Authority, for Arendt, was grounded in traditions and “gave the world the permanence and durability which human beings need precisely because they are mortals—the most unstable and futile beings we know of.”\(^9\) Although Arendt made this point in 1958, before the current concern with postmodernism, the post-modern threat of groundlessness was in part the subject of Arendt’s essay. For many of us, outside guides, authorities and commands do shelter us from the anxiety of uncertainty and the reality of our own death, appearing to give us a guide to a meaningful, well-regarded life. But authority may simply fulfill the function of other needs; it is not a need in

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38. See A. Miller, supra note 37, at 8-9; S. Olner & P. Olner, The Altruistic Personality 179-85 (1988) (describing the difference in childrearing practices of parents of those non-Jewish individuals who helped rescue or aid Jews in Nazi Europe); E. Sagan, supra note 36, at 209-10 (psychodynamic interpretations).

and of itself. It may be that when we are most threatened with death anxiety we seek authority or certainty and are vulnerable to authoritarianism. The more chaos seems to threaten us, the more rigid we may become. If it is true that authority serves to shelter us from uncertainty, death anxiety, meaningless or groundlessness, perhaps we should address those issues rather than abdicating our responsibility for ourselves and others by deferring to authority.

Scholars have had difficulty defining authority in contrast to other guides to human behavior and choice. Authority has been defined as communication capable of "reasoned elaboration," tradition and "rational consent of agents to obey rules and officials installed according to proper procedures." It is that which serves as a "preemptive" reason for acting—a person obeys even if the authority is, in her own judgment, mistaken. A person "treats [authority] as a reason for judging or acting in the absence of understood reasons, or for disregarding at least some reasons which . . . would in the absence of the [authority] have sufficed to justify proceeding in some other way." Authority is power and violence for some, although others dispute that connection. It is the ordering of existence through rules, or it is "an attempt to interpret the conditions of power." One author, who has recognized the threat of authoritarianism latent in authority, sought to insulate authority from authoritarianism by defining "rightly instituted" authority as "a mode of coordination that treats individuals with the respect due them without requiring each to possess an impossibly high degree of knowledge about every sector of social life or an unreasonably high level of civic virtue." It is "an appropriate mode of coordination" for accomplishing things in large, pluralistic societies. John Finnis has argued that in order for human groups to achieve any coordination in pursuing common goals, "[t]here must be either unanimity, or authority." Although his definition of authority resembles that of a necessary coordinating device, his claim about the need for authority is more absolute. His assertion that human groups cannot accomplish anything  

40. See Connolly, Modern Authority and Ambiguity, in Authority Revisited: NOMOS XXIX, supra note 13, at 9, 17-19, 22.  
41. Frieduch, Authority, Reason, and Discretion, in Authority: NOMOS I, supra note 13, at 28, 29.  
42. Arendt, supra note 16, at 112 (authority grounded in past).  
43. Connolly, supra note 40, at 13.  
44. J. Finnis, Natural Law and Natural Rights 234 (1980) (emphasis in original) (adapting Joseph Raz's definition); see J. Raz, Morality, supra note 13, at 38-49.  
45. Hardin, Does Might Make Right? in Authority Revisited: NOMOS XXIX, supra note 13, at 215; Ball, Authority and Conceptual Change, in id. at 41, 52-54.  
46. Jones, On Authority: Or, Why Women are not Entitled to Speak, in id. at 152, 153.  
47. R. Sennett, supra note 13, at 19.  
48. Connolly, supra note 40, at 19.  
without obeying authority or having absolute agreement suggests a suspicious view of human nature. Finnis does appear to exclude from the realm of possibility other human solutions to coordinating problems. Yet, human culture is too rich and diverse to leave us with the stark options of absolute agreement or absolute deference to authority.

Whatever the definition of authority, however, the absence of authority is frequently asserted as the equivalent of social chaos—anarchy, in the negative sense, on a scale of the Reign of Terror—because of beliefs about the way humans are: individuals pursuing their own ends to the exclusion of others, individuals full of anti-social, wicked aggressions that must be repressed. As one author has observed, claims about the need for authority are often grounded in a vision of human behavior as "intrinsically bellicose" and conflict-riddled; if this is true, "[t]he rules of authority . . . provide sanctuary from the dangers of social intercourse." A belief in the violence of human nature and the "consequent need for social regulation" has led many social theorists to assert the need for authority, order and control; yet as anthropologist Renato Rosaldo observes, analysts seldom examine the causes of social violence and chaos. Instead, "chaos appears more as a trope for use in debate[,] . . . an only half-revealed threat of 'what would happen if . . . .'" Further, "[t]he vision of chaos following the collapse of the sociocultural order induces a feeling of panic," because the nature of such a collapse is left nightmarishly vague. Indeed, the terror at the prospect of chaos may lead to a desire for rigid control, increasing the likelihood of authority becoming authoritarian.

Arguments regarding the necessity for authority, from social chaos or from permanence, beg the question of whether authority itself is a need or whether it is a functional adaptation to fill other needs. While it is true that we probably are better off having some coordination or agreement on things such as on which side of the road to drive, it does not necessarily follow that authority, rather than custom, tradition, habit or practice, is necessary to this end. It is certainly not clear that humans by nature (rather than because of culture) must have coercive authority to accomplish coordination.

In much the same manner as argument from presupposed needs for authority and the threat of social chaos, legal authority becomes a necessary

50. This point is developed in Henderson, Whose Nature?, supra note 25.
51. See R. Rosaldo, Culture and Truth (1989) (cultural anthropologist’s analysis suggesting humans improvise and influence culture, including adjusting to contingencies and coordinating responses).
52. See supra notes 35-38.
53. Jones, supra note 46, at 157
54. R. Rosaldo, supra note 51, at 99.
55. Id. at 100.
56. Id.
premise for scholars, rather than being a phenomenon that fulfills certain functions (and, tautologically, legitimate authority is legal authority, which tells us nothing about the goodness or badness of the authority). To the extent that we have not abandoned the belief, "usually attributed to Hobbes, that without regulative norms people become pathologically violent," law becomes unquestionably necessary because law is the way to keep "everybody from tearing everybody to bits." This vision, in turn, fosters authoritarian attitudes toward law.

B. The Meaning of Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism has at least two different meanings: one simply of unquestioning obedience to authority, and one of obedience combined with the use of authority to repress, punish and oppress human beings. Obedience to authority itself might best be described as formal authoritarianism—it is solely concerned with the process of identifying authoritative commands or directions and then following them. Substantive authoritarianism, on the other hand, not only entails the process of obeying commands or rules, but also involves oppression and punishment.

Hannah Arendt argued that formal authoritarianism was justified. To Arendt, authoritarianism meant obedience to legitimate authority and hierarchy as a matter of acceptance of traditionally constituted, past authority. She defended traditional modes of willing authoritarian obedience, arguing that authority by definition was based on legitimate power. The power was legitimate because it had been "assumed and 'proven' by a source beyond or above the ruler." Legitimacy originated "outside the range of human deeds," either because it sprang from a transcendent source, or because the human sources had existed in the past. Authority provided permanence, stability and certainty; authority transcended both power and those individuals holding power; resort to coercion or force meant that authority had failed. Thus, authoritarianism signified obedience to authority out of acceptance, not because of reason, coercion or fear.

Arendt’s belief in the need for authority led her to distinguish authoritarian structures from totalitarian structures in order to protect governmental and social systems that she respected, as well as to defend against what she

58. Id. (quoting H. SULLIVAN, THE INTERPERSONAL THEORY OF PSYCHIATRY 213-14 (1953)).
60. Id. at 83.
61. Id. at 82-83.
62. Id. at 112.
63. Id. at 110.
64. Id. at 82.
65. Id.
saw as the regrettable modern decline in authority from critique arising from the extreme authoritarianism of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia. For Arendt, as long as authoritarian governments did not do away with human freedom entirely, they were not tyrannical and were not to be condemned. Authoritarian systems—systems that contained a complex of demands for obedience—were acceptable to Arendt; she argued that "historically, . . . authoritarian forms of rule did not wish to abolish, but to limit freedom, and these limitations were felt necessary to protect and safeguard liberty." 

In instances of obedience to a benign authority, there are not many serious problems in Arendt's definition of authoritarianism: authoritarianism is hardly a pejorative term if the accepted authority is good. Obedience to good rules or authorities, even if they are grounded in the past and even if the obedience is grudging or unwilling, in many instances is morally better than disobedience. Thus, it is better to obey the command not to murder even if one feels homicidal impulses toward a person than to disobey; obedience to traffic rules—a frequently used example of the need for authority—makes more sense than disobedience. But this observation does not establish that authority per se is good or that it is necessary in all instances. Even obedience to a good rule may have unfortunate effects, and simultaneous obedience to several good rules may be impossible.

Arendt's defense of traditional sources of authority should not strike legal scholars as unfamiliar or strange. Much of law is based on following traditions and respecting legal authority and process. Undoubtedly, most lawyers believe that law is necessary to the ordering of human affairs, and some believe that respect for legal authority is essential to human happiness and moral behavior. Therefore, the legal actor generally accepts legal authority as good, although she may dispute particular exercises of that authority. The precepts of that authority are followed and obeyed and defended out of this acceptance. Arendt made the observation that the founding fathers and the Constitution, as sources of authority, played the same role in the United States as the founding of Rome had played for the authoritarian Roman empire. Similarly, a number of constitutional scholars and judges have argued that the source for authority is in the past—in the founding constitutional moment, the super-human, parental qualities of the drafters and the text. Because the authority of the founding moment is good, the Constitution's authority is good. The goodness of the founders

66. Id. at 83.
67. For an elaboration of this point, see Henderson, Whose Nature?, supra note 25.
68. See West, Authoritarian Impulse, supra note 8, at 531.
69. Arendt, supra note 16, at 109-10; see also Michelman, Law's Republic, supra note 8, at 1515-16 (summarizing Hanna Pitkin's characterization of the founding moment).
70. See infra text accompanying notes 208-39.
becomes the goodness of the Constitution; the authority of the Constitution therefore must never be challenged because it is good. Although this argument conflates legal and moral norms and simply makes the legal the right and the good, it is not an unfamiliar posture. Rather, it resembles Arendt's description of the role of the founding moment in authoritarian systems.

The argument for uncritical acceptance of authority can quickly lead to more severe forms of authoritarianism. As soon as uncritical acceptance of and obedience to authority become the norm, the accepted authority has the power to oppress, to punish, to repress and to dominate. For example, the well-known Milgram studies provide a chilling example of authority's power to command obedient persons to inflict pain on others in order to punish them.\textsuperscript{71} Arendt sought to preserve the value of obedience to authority by distinguishing authoritarianism from totalitarianism, but even authoritarianism in her formal sense—obeying because the authority is accepted by tradition and practice—can quickly become authoritarianism in a substantive, negative sense. While her distinction between totalitarian and authoritarian illustrates a point on a continuum that ranges from benign or humanistic authority to gulags or death camps, unfortunately the distinction has deflected attention from description and analysis of repressive regimes that are not totalitarian, that is, completely dominant over their citizenry.\textsuperscript{72}

For example, the United States government used Arendt's distinction to legitimate a difference in policies toward brutal right-wing regimes and those on the left, thereby muddying the point that some authoritarian governments are more repressive in more ways than others, whether they are right-wing dictatorships such as the Pinochet regime in Chile, or communist dictatorships such as the Romanian regime of Ceausescu.\textsuperscript{73}

Accordingly, the term authoritarian has taken on a different connotation in much political and psychological writing, one that is negative and critical. In this context, authoritarianism embodies specific combinations of personal, group and political orientations and outcomes. In some ways, authoritarianism is a difficult concept because so often it is more of a tone or orientation rather than an easily identifiable category of definitive traits or characteristics. Further, authoritarian refers both to an individual's use of and attitude toward authority as well as to particular political structures

\textsuperscript{71} S. Milgram, \textit{Obedience to Authority} (1974) (describing experimental studies which test an individual's willingness to obey authority even when she believes she is inflicting pain on the experimental subject; generalizing from evidence that obedience to a perceived authority might explain the willingness of "moral" people to commit atrocities on others; Milgram suggests that the problem is authority, not authoritarianism).

\textsuperscript{72} Amos Perlmutter has termed the distinction "unproductive" both descriptively and analytically in analyzing political systems. \textit{See} A. Perlmutter, \textit{supra} note 18, at 62-71.

\textsuperscript{73} The distinction was stressed by Jeanne Kirkpatrick to offer a reason for U.S. support of oppressive right-wing dictatorships. M. French, \textit{Beyond Power} 340 (1985).
with many of the same characteristics. Generally, however, the authoritarian world-view holds a vision of human beings as monsters; this vision pervades its justifications for authority, control, punishment, and obedience.\textsuperscript{74} Authoritarian systems and individuals may be more or less repressive, punitive and hostile to certain beliefs, activities or groups. They may be leftist or right-wing in their ideologies and politics, but they nevertheless share some common characteristics.

Perhaps as a result of the history of the United States and the original concerns of researchers, right-wing authoritarianism has been the primary focus of research on authoritarian movements in this country and on the authoritarian personality.\textsuperscript{75} For example, Professor Lipset has argued that, historically, the authoritarian political orientation in the United States has been a combination of social conservatism and nativism with nineteenth-century visions of laissez-faire economics.\textsuperscript{76} In the United States, authoritarian movements have been associated with traditional moralism, support for the status quo, the belief in the necessity of maintaining order, an emphasis on obedience to government as essential to avoid anarchy, and antipathy toward new ideas.\textsuperscript{77}

Similarly, concern with right-wing movements was the impetus for research on the authoritarian individual. The notion of the authoritarian personality\textsuperscript{78} was developed by some members of the Frankfurt school in exile in the United States as part of an effort to understand what influenced the rise of naziism and anti-semitism in Germany.\textsuperscript{79} The notion of the authoritarian personality still has descriptive force, although interest and research support virtually disappeared during the Cold War era.\textsuperscript{80} Although there has been much dispute about the psychodynamic interpretations of the authors, the validity of the usual instrument used to measure "authoritarian" personality (the F-scale)\textsuperscript{81} and other portions of the study, subsequent studies and measures have resulted in similar descriptions of what constitutes an authoritarian orientation. According to a number of studies, the authoritarian

\textsuperscript{74} H. Kelman & V. Hamilton, Crimes of Obedience 23-52 (1989). I do not intend to say here that humans are incapable of behaving like monsters; such a claim would be silly as well as false. The irony is that such monsters are so often obeying an authority and have injected authoritarian values. See S. Milgram, supra note 71.


\textsuperscript{76} S. Lipset, supra note 20, at 169, 432-33.

\textsuperscript{77} S. Lipset & E. Raab, supra note 75, at 7-20.


\textsuperscript{79} Id. at vii, xiii, i-11.


\textsuperscript{81} Kelman and Hamilton, for example, criticize the "format and wording of items" used in the F-scale, where "the authoritarian response to each item is also the 'agree' response." H. Kelman & V. Hamilton, supra note 74, at 279.
individual values and follows rules. She is rigid, inflexible and intolerant of difference. The prototypical authoritarian person has a low tolerance for ambiguity, adopts conventional behaviors and beliefs and is prone to negative stereotypy. Authoritarians may be cynical, distrustful, intolerant, moralistic, anti-democratic and nationalistic. Authoritarians are unlikely to have much empathy for the suffering or pain of others and are likely to be prejudiced against racial, religious and ethnic "outgroups." Further, authoritarians tend to support patriarchal beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes about women and sexuality.

Authoritarians obey and demand obedience to authority's commands simply because they are commands, and they hold a harshly punitive attitude toward those who do not comply. The authoritarian does not hold independent judgments about the goodness or value of rules and finds challenges to rules or settled understandings deeply threatening. The authoritarian individual obeys authority either to escape punishment or because she has thoroughly introjected—made a part of her identity—the authoritative definition of her status and role. Thus, strict compliance with rules can arise either from fear or introjection of authority. Erich Fromm posited that the authoritarian masochistically obeys those hierarchically above her and sadistically punishes those beneath her or deviant from her, whether she is conscious of the sadomasochistic dynamic or not; obeying and pleasing the authority is the most important goal for the authoritarian.

83. S. Lipset, supra note 20, at 476-88.
84. G. Allport, supra note 82, at 454-36; S. Olner & P. Olner, supra note 38, at 174.
85. The authors of The Authoritarian Personality found a strong correlation between ethnocentrism and authoritarianism in their study. See The Authoritarian Personality, supra note 78, at 193-94, 353-73. See generally G. Allport, supra note 82.
87 For example, several studies have found a correlation between authoritarian attitudes and support for capital punishment in the United States. See Cowan, Thompson & Ellsworth, The Effects of Death Qualification on Jurors' Predisposition to Convict and on the Quality of Deliberation, 8 LAW & HUM. BEHAV 53, 69 (1984) (variables significantly predicting first ballot votes in a simulated jury study were the "Legal Authoritarianism" score and the attitude toward the death penalty; the two attitudes were highly intercorrelated); Thompson, Cowan, Ellsworth & Harrington, Death Penalty Attitudes and Conviction Proneness, 8 LAW & HUM. BEHAV 95, 97 (1984) (summarizing research); H. Vidmar & P. Ellsworth, Public Opinion and the Death Penalty 1260-61 & n.78 (1974) (discussing research on the relationship of authoritarianism to intolerance and punitiveness).
89. E. Fromm, Man for Himself 148-59 (1947); E. Fromm, supra note 88, at 163-90; see also McConahay, Mullin & Frederick, The Uses of Social Science in Trials with Political and Racial Overtones: The Trial of Joan Little, 41 LAW & CONTEMP. PROBS. 205, 217 (1977) ("The authoritarian is servile and obsequious in a subordinate position, but takes out all of his or her pent-up hostility and frustration upon those perceived to be in violation of the conventional norms of society.").
Authoritarian's emphasis on obedience enables her to persecute, torture or oppress others without guilt and perhaps even with pleasure at the behest of the idealized or introjected authority. Authoritarians have the "tendency to be on the lookout for, and to condemn, reject, and punish people who violate conventional values." They reject "the subjective, the imaginative, the tender-minded," (meaning the compassionate); the authoritarian view of human nature is negative and suspicious, in keeping with a Hobbesian vision of the world.

A more recent study suggests that authoritarians may fall into two general categories. Rule authoritarians are those who obey political authority to avoid punishment but are generally alienated from authority; role authoritarians are those who obey out of a sense of obligation and identification with their role in the state. "Rule orientation represents compliance with power; role orientation, [moral] obligation to obey authority." The authors found that both orientations to authority correlate with those measures of authoritarianism that have been devised. In terms of citizenship and politics, rule-oriented authoritarians see it as their task to follow the rules: to respect authorities' demands, do what is required of them, and stay out of trouble. In return, they expect the government to uphold the rules and thus protect their basic interests and ensure societal order. Role-oriented citizens, who identify with the nation and are involved in their roles within it, have a higher set of expectations. They want to be and to perceive themselves as good citizens who meet their role obligations by actively supporting the government and faithfully obeying its demands. They expect the government to uphold the integrity of their roles by ensuring high status for the nation. They support policies that contribute to enhancing their sense of status.

To the extent that they have a higher status and "tend to be caught up in the workings of the authority structure," the role-oriented authoritarians can be quite supportive of and active in authoritarian oppression of others. Thus it might be that role-oriented authoritarians, because they so often hold positions of power or authority themselves, should be of greatest concern, because they are also likely to be both active and efficacious in

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90. The Authoritarian Personality, supra note 78, at 157, 361; E. Fromm, supra note 88, at 186-88.
91. The Authoritarian Personality, supra note 78, at 157.
92. Id. at 157.
93. Id. at 148.
94. H. Kelman & V. Hamilton, supra note 74, at 317.
95. Id. at 291.
96. Id. at 278-79.
97. Id. at 268.
98. Id. at 272.
99. Id. at 318.
perpetuating oppression, subordination and punishment of despised groups. Rule-oriented authoritarians are more compliant: “They do what is necessary and no more”100 and, although they obviously will cooperate with authoritarian oppression, they may be less likely to initiate it.

In summary, then, the authoritarian individual is preoccupied with hierarchy, power and obedience. Authoritarians are likely to be rigid, inflexible, ethnocentric and punitive. Intolerance and distrust of anything different and of human nature generally combine to capture a particular cluster of orientations to authority and rules. In contrast, the anti-authoritarian tends to be economically and socially egalitarian, trusting of others, tolerant, flexible, empathic, non-stereotypical in thought, and ready to take moral responsibility for choices and actions.101

Authoritarian political systems are characterized by “repression, intolerance, [and] encroachment on the private rights and freedoms of citizens.”102 Authoritarian governments take various forms and use various mechanisms to assure state hegemony in society, with greater or lesser degrees of success. Although such governments may depend on “centralized executive control and coercion”103 and the need for command and obedience, they do not necessarily deny “constitutional authority, the Rule of Law and functional representation.”104 Rather, the modern authoritarian state simply makes order and stability, and thus obedience, its “absolute priority”105. Political authoritarianism rejects strong or pluralistic forms of democracy, as well as liberalism and democratic socialism, but it is not inconsistent with a token form of democracy. To maintain an authoritarian regime, the leaders must have mass support of and agreement with the system, because the state cannot be maintained solely by coercive force at all times.106 Competing authorities must be co-opted or disabled, and power must be concentrated in the state; therefore, authoritarian governments seek to dominate “by arresting, subverting, or destroying autonomous individual, collective, and institutional behavior.”107 Further, and related to the authoritarian personality, authoritarian governments arise from “radical nationalism; antiliberalism; antiparlimentarism; an antibourgeois ethos; and anti-Semitism and racism.”108

100. Id. at 273.
101. THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY, supra note 78, at 475; H. KELMAN & V HAMILTON, supra note 74, at 261-306.
102. A. PELLMUTTER, supra note 18, at 7-8.
103. Id. at 24.
104. Id. at 25.
105. Id.
106. Mass support or popular support may be coerced or courted, but modern authoritarian governments need and rely on general support or acquiescence in order to consolidate their power. See id., passim.
107 Id. at 25.
108. Id. at 78.
The connection between the development of authoritarian government and authoritarian personality, while not proven, is at least descriptively useful: "[A]uthoritarianism is an orientation that is both cultural and structural." If a culture reproduces authoritarian attitudes, and its citizens are raised to be authoritarians, there is little reason to believe that a regime that is oppressive and intolerant cannot exist under the Rule of Law.

The above discussion of the authoritarian personality and the authoritarian political state captures the paradigm of the authoritarian. Not every authoritarian person or state necessarily has all of the traits associated with the descriptions; persons with authoritarian personality characteristics can be quite kind towards their friends and family or reference group, for example, and authoritarian governments may tolerate some deviance, some free speech, and so on. But recurring themes in all manifestations of authoritarianism are an overriding concern with obedience to authority, its directives and rules; an emphasis on order, predictability and stability; and a punitive and suspicious attitude toward others. Historically and presently, there appears to be some relationship between authoritarian government and personality on the one hand, and racism and anti-Semitism on the other. There is some indication as well that authoritarian governments and persons insist on the maintenance of patriarchy and male dominance.

The authoritarian attitude is learned and culturally defined, not innate. Learned cultural attitudes toward authority affect attitudes toward one of our most powerful primary references for authority, law. In fact, oppressive, or substantive, authoritarianism is probably meant by many legal scholars when they refer to the authoritarian or to authoritarianism in their writings. The orientation of a person or culture to the authority of law can be as authoritarian as an orientation to military authority, parental authority or religious authority, with equally good or bad results. The next section discusses the implications that the authoritarian attitude holds for law.

C. Authoritarianism and Law

It might be that law and formal authoritarianism are always closely linked and that much of legal thinking is conducive to authoritarianism. Formal or substantive authoritarianism may be completely compatible with law because of law's concern with rules, rule-following, hierarchies of authority,
and its recourse to coercion to ensure obedience. Further, recurrent political and scholarly concerns with obedience to law and the power of legal actors to decide upon or to legislate punishments can quickly reinforce law's relationship to authoritarianism. Finally, law and legality may be sources of authority that are always at risk of becoming authoritarian in the substantive sense, because law is interconnected with state and private forms of power.

It should not be considered bizarre at this point to note that law and politics are related or that law is a particular form of political practice, but I do not intend to defend that proposition here. It should, however, be obvious to legal scholars that law governs allocations of power among persons and institutions, and power is the subject of politics. The proximity of law to state power and the invocation of the state's coercive mechanisms, even in the so-called private law fields, are enough to support the claim that law and state power are closely related. Law is also political in that it helps to determine allocations of social power. Nevertheless, some scholars resist the notion that authoritarianism and legal thinking are related. Scholars have made arguments about law's inconsistency with authoritarianism and also about the ability of the Rule of Law to protect us from authoritarianism. Yet, neither set of arguments is entirely persuasive.

Despite our cultural assumption that the Rule of Law automatically prevents tyranny and oppression—the bicentennial celebration of the Constitution was notably silent about the fact that the original document legitimated the enslavement of an entire race of people—this section argues that there is nothing intrinsic to the Rule of Law that prevents authoritarianism. Indeed, there is a paradox present in the understanding of the Rule of Law in this culture, including the legal culture. On the one hand, the Rule of Law is invoked as a guaranty against tyranny. On the other hand, it is invoked to require unquestioning obedience to law, no matter what its content. Both of these claims emphasize process although, under some views, the Rule of Law embodies the substantive values of rights, liberties and liberal democracy. Another tension identified by Margaret Radin exists in legal scholarship between what she terms "instrumental" views and


113. See Michelman, Law's Republic, supra note 8; Michelman, A Plea, supra note 112.


"substantive" views of the Rule of Law. This tension reflects the paradox as well: "The instrumental conception [of the Rule of Law] is a model of government by rules to achieve the government's ends, whatever they may be. The substantive conception is a model of government by rules to achieve the goals of the social contract: liberty and justice."\(^{116}\)

For many legal scholars, as well as political actors, the privileged understanding of the Rule of Law and its virtues\(^{117}\) endows it with the substantive characteristic of preventing tyranny and oppression.\(^{118}\) As E.P Thompson wrote in his historical study of the oppressive Black Act in England, the development of the Rule of Law is usually seen as an "unqualified human good."\(^{119}\) Familiar to most are the favorable views of the Rule of Law captured by Thomas Paine's declaration that in America, ""the Rule of Law is King,""\(^{120}\) and the statement that the government of the United States is a government of laws, not men [sic].\(^{121}\) Although historical development of the idea that law binds the politically powerful and the governors as well as the governed was an unquestionable improvement over the abuses of whimsical and arbitrary tyrants, this fact alone does not ensure that the Rule of Law is the Rule of good Law, as Joseph Raz has written.\(^{122}\) Even the prime virtue of the Rule of Law, that all are bound by it, does not dictate the content of the law.


117. I want to stress that by observing that our confidence in the ability of the Rule of Law to protect us from authoritarianism is misplaced does not entail any claim that the Rule of Law virtues do not have real value or are insignificant. The Rule of Law virtues are important, but they alone do not invariably protect against oppression. In criticizing aspects of legality's ethic of rule- (or standard-) following, I am not claiming that all rules are bad or that rule adherence is necessarily bad. I am asserting that it is mistaken to assume that the Rule of Law is an absolute safeguard against abuses of power and authoritarian oppression. Similarly, good rules should be implemented and followed, but just because something is a rule does not automatically mean that it is good or right; and even rules seen as good may have oppressive or dehumanizing effects that we should not and cannot ignore. I argue this point in the context of a rule requiring no distinction on the basis of race and in the context of the first amendment's prohibition on regulation of speech. See Henderson, *Whose Nature?*, supra note 25.

118. See, Sen. George Mitchell's statements during Oliver North's testimony in the Iran-Contra hearings: "The rule of law is critical in our society. It's the great equalizer, because in America everybody is equal before the law. However important and noble an objective, and surely democracy abroad is important and is noble, it cannot be achieved at the expense of the rule of law in our country." W Cohen & G. Mitchell, *Men of Zeal* 170 (1988). "We have to respect the rule of law until we can change the law itself, because otherwise the rule of law will be reduced to the law of rule." Id. at 182. I must admit, I stood up and cheered when Sen. Mitchell spoke those words.


There is nothing intrinsic to the Rule of Law that entails absolute or even partial protection of individuals or groups from tyranny and oppression, despite our habitual use of the Rule of Law in this sense. It is perfectly consistent to have an authoritarian state under the Rule of Law, for although the Rule of Law establishes that "government shall be ruled by the law and subject to it," the form of government under law may be a dictator, an oligarchy or a democracy. For example, South Africa is an authoritarian state operating under Rule of Law principles, but it cannot be termed a free society even though it is a democracy for the white minority and has a written constitution. Similarly, the government of the United States has tyrannized whole populations, including African-Americans, Native Americans and Japanese Americans, under the Rule of Law.

Further, the Rule of Law has another authoritarian aspect: the Rule of Law requires obedience to authorities constituted by law and signifies the state's power of social control. Although Spiro Agnew and Edwin Meese might be caricatures of this meaning, their (at times exaggerated) "law and order" rhetoric hardly diminishes its force, even among legal scholars. As Joseph Vining has asserted, law depends on obedience: "Any theory [of law], indeed any conception of system in human affairs, contains an unstated and usually unexamined assumption that people will follow the law. If people don't follow the law, they could be required to." And as Robert Cover so eloquently reminded us, the agents and institutions of the law have the power to compel obedience by force if it is not forthcoming and to punish disobedience. Finally, as Margaret Radin has noted, the Rule of Law assumes that "rules are supposed to rule" no matter what their moral content. Thus, the Rule of Law may be malicious or benign, and laws and rules may be harsh and punitive or humanitarian.

For one dedicated to law, it is difficult to appreciate that law often facilitates the abuse of power and is both directly and indirectly implicated in human suffering: the Hart-Fuller debate about whether Nazi Germany...
did or did not have law—a debate that has continued in various forms—might reflect the legal scholar's wish to deny law's complicity with evil. Hart had argued that the natural law argument that law must meet the "minimum requirements of morality" or not be law at all was mistaken: to conflate what is and what ought to be "will serve . . . only to conceal the facts." The problem of Nazi Germany was not that law was invalid as "contravening the fundamental principles of morality," but that for some reason, the separation of law and morals "acquired a sinister character in Germany." Fuller responded that law must have an inner morality to be law at all, claiming that Nazi Germany's laws violated that inner morality by violating the Rule of Law virtues of nonretroactivity, publicity and disregard of the duly promulgated legal texts that were in place, and that therefore Germany had no law during the Nazi regime. In defense of the Rule of Law's virtue, Fuller wrote:

To me there is nothing shocking in saying that a dictatorship which clothes itself with a tinsel of legal form can so far depart from the morality of order, from the inner morality of law itself, that it ceases to be a legal system. When a system calling itself law is predicated upon a general disregard by judges of the terms of the laws they purport to enforce, when this system habitually cures its legal irregularities, even the grossest, by retroactive statutes, when it has only to resort to forays of terror in the streets, which no one dares challenge, in order to escape even those scant restraints imposed by the pretence of legality . . . it is not hard for me, at least, to deny to it the name of law.

Füller was correct in stating that Rule of Law virtues do exclude some methods of using law to realize authoritarian goals: requiring that government and its officials be bound by the law, requiring that laws be applied equally and forbidding the use of secret or retroactive laws can diminish abuse. Yet, because Rule of Law virtues are not inconsistent with evil law, these procedural goods under the Rule of Law are a necessary but

130. Thus, Ronald Dworkin never satisfactorily answered how Judge Siegfried should decide a case in Nazi Germany involving the lack of contract rights for Jewish people under the interpretive theory developed in Law's Empire. See R. Dworkin, supra note 129, at 104-08.
132. Id. at 629.
133. Id. at 618.
134. Fuller, Positivism and Fidelity to Law—A Reply to Professor Hart, 71 Harv. L. Rev. 630, 650-56 (1958).
135. Id. at 660.
insufficient safeguard against authoritarian regimes. Authoritarianism is not arbitrariness, whim, or caprice—it is unremitting insistence on obedience and punishment of those who disobey. Thus law, like all forms of normative authority, can easily carry within it the seeds of oppression, intolerance and demands for blind obedience without necessarily violating Rule of Law precepts. Unless one stretches the meaning of the Rule of Law to include the substantive requirements of reciprocity, fairness, and respect for persons on the part of the state, there is little to prevent authoritarian abuses under law. The Rule of Law may therefore offer little more than symbolic comfort to those concerned with the use of law to oppress and punish human beings.

Joseph Vinng is a legal scholar who has been concerned with the relationship of law to authoritarianism. But he has concerned himself primarily with defending common law legal method and practice, as well as the internal morality of law, against what he sees as the growth in the law of bureaucratic formalism and diffusion of responsibility. His book entitled The Authoritative and the Authoritarian manifests a general tendency on the part of legal thinkers to use the terms authoritarian or authoritarianism as a contrast to what law properly is. Thus, Vinng variously refers to authoritarianism as blind obedience, the tyranny of personal authority, and simple obedience. According to Vinng, authoritarianism is the state of affairs that occurs when the Rule of Law is ignored: he uses it to mean governments run by charismatic, man-on-a-white-horse leaders, regimes of pure power and tyranny, or government by impersonal bureaucracy. For Vinng, authoritarianism signifies, as one reviewer noted, “a world of madness, solitude, detachment, resistance, disillusionment, distrust, overlooking, mockery, indifference, strategy, process, bondage, death, passivity, pain, nature, doubt, enmity, meaninglessness, and power.” This description of horrors that can arise in authoritarian regimes is not authoritarianism.

Further, Vinng backs away from some of the implications of authoritarianism for law and legality; he seems to be ambivalent about relinquishing obedience and formal authoritarianism. The authoritative is still that which

137 This is true despite Lon Fuller’s confidence that perfection of the Rule of Law virtues, or the internal morality of law, would converge with the good. See L. FULLER, THE MORALITY OF LAW 153-86 (1977).
138. Id. at 786, 791. Radin refers to these notions as those that are embodied in the “substantive” version of the Rule of Law, which combines the procedural requirements of the “instrumentalist” conception with the achievement of the “goals of the social contract: liberty and justice.” Radin, supra note 116, at 792.
139. J. VINING, supra note 14.
140. See, e.g., id. at 124, 157, 166.
141. Id. at 157.
142. Id.
commands obedience;\textsuperscript{144} perhaps it is his insistence on obedience to proper legal authority that leads him to observe that "there is much of the authoritarian woven into law" and that "a little authoritarianism is a good thing."\textsuperscript{145} To the extent that it is not a good thing, Vining appears to assume that the internal methods of legal practice and thought within the common law method will prevent authoritarianism in law.

In contrast to Fuller and Vining, two legal scholars, Robert Cover and Robin West, have made substantial contributions to understanding legal authoritarianism. These two scholars have explored aspects of legal authoritarianism in the greatest depth and consistency across their work, and although each explore only one side of the authoritarian coin, they both have explored the relation of law to oppression and abuse. The work of Robert Cover is concerned with the punitive, oppressive and violent aspects of law; the work of Robin West addresses the problem of uncritical obedience to law and legal authority.

The lack of scholarly acknowledgment, until very recently, of Cover's suggestion that law has too often been a mechanism for state violence and human oppression indicates the difficulty legal scholars have in acknowledging that law can be oppressive as a matter of course, rather than as an occasional exception.\textsuperscript{146} Perhaps no other scholar has been more concerned with the violent and punitive nature of law than Cover. His journey began with his study of judicial enforcement of the fugitive slave laws in \textit{Justice Accused}\textsuperscript{147} and ended in an assertion that law was not an instrument of the state. He wrote that he was an "anarchist . with anarchy understood to mean the absence of rulers, not the absense of law."\textsuperscript{148} By this statement, Cover may have meant to reiterate Paine's statement that it is the Rule of Law that is king, but it seems to have rested more on Cover's belief that law is a site of struggle over meaning.\textsuperscript{149} For Cover, law was not state power or even an instrument of government, but rather is \textit{any} social understanding of normative authority:\textsuperscript{150} "[T]here is a radical dichotomy between the social organization of law as power and the organization of

\textsuperscript{144} See J. \textbf{Vining, supra} note 14, at 123, 185.

\textsuperscript{145} \textit{Id.} at 148.

\textsuperscript{146} A striking example can be found in the contributions to the \textit{Yale Law Journal} issue published in memory of Cover. See Essays, 96 \textit{Yale L.J.} 1727 (1987). \textit{But see} Forbath, \textit{supra} note 11 (examining court-sanctioned violence in "private" sector against the labor movement prior to the Wagner Act); Luban, \textit{supra} note 8 (discussing the authoritarian action by Supreme Court in \textit{Walker v. City of Birmingham}); Winter, \textit{Transcendental Nonsense, Metaphoric Reasoning and the Cognitive Stakes for Law}, 137 \textit{U. Pa. L. Rev.} 1105, 1223-24 (1989) ("Law is two parts violence and three parts hope.").

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{R. Cover, Justice Accused} (1975).


\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Id.} at 181; Cover, Nomos and Narrative, \textit{supra} note 26, at 9-10.

\textsuperscript{150} Cover, \textit{Folktales, supra} note 148, at 182.
law as meaning." Further, "in the domain of legal meaning, it is force and violence that are problematic." Law was the normative and interpretive commitment of a community; it was meaning accompanied by such strong commitment that it could lead to active resistance to other interpretations. While pure legal meaning was, for Cover, divorced from power and coercion, judicial violence had to be tested against community commitments. Because, for Cover, "[a] legal world is built only to the extent that there are commitments that place bodies on the line," violence might be the only way to assure the dominance of one legal interpretation over another. One need not accept that law is whatever someone is prepared to put her body on the line for to gain an appreciation of Cover's exposure of the punitive and oppressive aspects of the American constitutional system or the authoritarian nature of the judiciary and the state.

Cover argued that the state sought to control law, its means of social control, in part through its "imperfect monopoly over the domain of violence." He asserted that judges invoke and implement state violence by insisting on obedience to their orders and sacrificing "legal meaning to the interest in public order." Judges, according to Cover, most typically applied a "statist" approach to law, denying the efficacy of alternative community interpretations. But legal meanings developed by committed communities were law as much as the meanings developed by the courts. He noted, "the jurisgenerative principle by which legal meaning proliferates never exists in isolation from violence. Interpretation always takes place in the shadow of coercion. Courts, at least the courts of the state, are characteristically 'jurispathic,'" literally killing off alternative legal meanings.

Cover also described a kind of "process authoritarianism" by describing the jurisdictional reasons given by judges to "place the violence of administration beyond the reach of 'law.'" He argued that judges promoted substantive authoritarianism through procedure, both by asserting their own power to punish and by deferring to state violence. Judges, by using "jurisdictional excuses to avoid disrupting the orderly deployment of state power and privilege," reinforced authoritarianism. In his examination of

151. Cover, Nomos and Narrative, supra note 26, at 18.
152. Id. at 25.
155. Cover, Nomos and Narrative, supra note 26, at 52.
156. Id. at 55.
157. Id. at 54-58, 67
158. Id. at 40.
159. Id. at 40, 53.
160. Id. at 56.
161. Id. at 67
Supreme Court cases, Cover argued that the Court had adopted what was in fact a substantively authoritarian stance towards its equity jurisdiction in injunction cases, “equity [being] ‘strong’ when the court is aligned with state violence and ‘weak’ when the court is a counterweight to that violence.”162 Private resistance—resistance to state law by citizens—was subordinated to a “regime of obedience—of state superiority” and “public order.”163 Thus the Supreme Court’s approval of the punitive use of state violence by a court in *Walker v. City of Birmingham*,164 which held that citizens had the duty to obey even unconstitutional lower court injunctions, was, for Cover, pure authoritarianism.

The rule of *Walker* subordinates the creation of legal meaning to the interest in public order. It is the rule of the judge, the insider, looking out. It speaks to the judge as agent of state violence and employer of that violence against the “private” disorder of movements, communities, unions, parties, “people,” “mobs.” Even when wrong, the judge is to act and is entitled to be obeyed. The signal *Walker* sends the judge is to be aggressive in confronting private resistance, because his authority will be vindicated.165

Thus, the Justices were both morally irresponsible and implicated in state violence and statist law.166 When asked to enjoin the state from engaging in violence, as in, for example, the Los Angeles police chokehold case,167 the Court used “jurisdictional excuses to avoid disrupting the orderly deployment of state power and privilege.”168 Using the reasons of federalism, separation of powers, deference to “majoritarian branches” and, in the case of lower court judges, obedience to hierarchy, Cover argued that the Court’s jurisdictional principles “align the interpretive acts of judges with the acts and interests of those who control the means of violence.”169

In *Violence and the Word*,170 Cover opposed the interpretivist turn in legal scholarship, pointing out that “[l]egal interpretive acts signal and occasion the imposition of violence upon others: A judge articulates her understanding of a text, and as a result, somebody loses his freedom, his property, his children, even his life.”171 Legal interpretation, unlike literary interpretation, was political and was “either played out on the field of pain and death or it is something less (or more) than law.”172 Legal interpretation,

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162. Id. at 56.
163. Id. at 55.
165. Cover, Nomos and Narrative, supra note 26, at 55; see Luban, supra note 8, at 2176-86.
166. Cover, Nomos and Narrative, supra note 26, at 58.
168. Cover, Nomos and Narrative, supra note 26, at 58.
169. Id. at 57.
171. Id. at 1601.
172. Id. at 1606-07.
as judges engaged in it, was "(1) a practical activity, (2) designed to generate credible threats and actual deeds of violence, (3) in an effective way." For example, the ideology of punishment justified to the judge and to others the violence of the criminal law. Drawing on Milgram's study of obedience to authority, Cover argued that institutional roles facilitated the imposition of violence. Although Cover did not make the argument, his description of judges bears some resemblance to that of role authoritarians. Consistent with Milgram's observations, Cover argued that when judges interpret the law they shelter themselves from the violent implications of their role as interpreters and they set into motion violence within institutional roles, giving persons permission to inflict pain that insulates them from inhibition. Judges thus identify with and are active in perpetuating state violence; that violence in turn limits the possibility of finding common meaning and "law".

While Cover emphasized the punitive and violent nature of law to demonstrate that judicial practices embody substantive authoritarianism, Robin West has focused more on unquestioning submission to authority and legal imperatives in much of her work. Although West generally has used the term authoritarian in a formal sense of unquestioning obedience to rules in the belief that the authority is good, a use similar to that of Arendt, she has not ignored the potential for oppression in the submission to authority. Her criticism of law and economics and of liberal legal theory discusses obedience to authority, but her work criticizing the law and literature movement tends, like Cover's criticism, to focus more on law's potential for violence and oppression. West has argued that all three of these schools of thought have tended to celebrate legal authority and obedience to law without acknowledging the oppression, subjugation and domination such celebrations of law entail.

Submission to power, blind obedience to authority and the resulting immoral consequences of abdicating moral responsibility are concerns throughout West's writing. She has argued that the authoritarian element of law and economics scholarship is captured in its use of consent as a proxy for the good. Thus, her critique of Posner's normative law and economics theory effectively used Kafka's narratives of relationships to authority and to law to demonstrate that consensual transactions fail to serve as meaningful proxies either for autonomy or for an individual's well-

173. *Id.* at 1610.
174. *Id.* at 1608.
177. *Id.* at 1614-15.
178. *Id.* at 1628-29.
being. Using excerpts from Kafka's stories to provide illustrations of consensual transactions, West argued from a psychodynamic approach that people consent to transactions that not only make them less well off, but also make them objectively miserable. People consent to a number of things that are objectively harmful to them in order to please hierarchical authority (the whipping scene in Kafka's novel *The Trial*), because at some level they crave punishment and expiation of guilt, or because they have agreed to and acquiesced in the authority's imperatives.

West posits throughout the article that obedience to authority is something people might crave "because it feels good to be ruled and to be deemed" or that obedience is an instinctually "ingrained need." One need not accept her tentative psychodynamic explanations for obedience that does not, at the moment of obeying, originate in fear of authority. Perhaps another of her suggested reasons for obedience is better supported by her arguments: consensual submission to authority becomes a functional way to abdicate moral responsibility and choice. Certainly in a post-modern era when "everything is up for grabs," deference to authority in order to avoid anxiety and groundlessness, seems to fit both with Kafka's literature and with some of our current legal practice. Submission seldom comes from fear—at least not directly—but may be the most functional way to avoid moral choice and responsibility for that choice:

> Obedience to legal rules to which we would have consented relieves us of the task of evaluating the morality and prudence of our own actions, a task that would be time-consuming and perhaps beyond our powers. If we want to lead moral lives, both for the sake of virtue and for the sake of others, the best way to do so may be simply to obey. Our tendency to legitimate lawful authority may have good or evil consequences, depending upon the moral value of the legal system to which we have submitted and the moral quality of the relationship between state and citizen that our consent nurtures.

Picking up on the theme of abdication of moral responsibility in a piece on authoritarian constitutional interpretation, West has argued that we have

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181. *Id.* at 395-96.
182. *Id.* at 416, 421-22.
183. *Id.* at 416-17.
184. *Id.* at 420 (discussing *The Refusal*).
185. *Id.* at 423.
186. This phrase was introduced into the scholarly lexicon by Arthur Leff. Leff, *Unspeakable Ethics, Unnatural Law*, 1979 Duke L.J. 1229, 1249.
188. *Id.* at 423; see also I. Yalom, *Existential Psychotherapy* 261 (1980) (individuals will embrace authority to avoid responsibility).
189. *West, Authority*, supra note 180, at 424 (footnote omitted).
delegated our moral choices to courts, which in turn defer to the authority of the constitutional text and obey the text rather than confront the moral dimension of the problem. An authoritarian judge answers constitutional law questions by reference to the authoritative text and obedience to that text or its framers. We submit ourselves to the text or delegate moral choice to such judges “because we have abandoned the project of our own moral self-governance.” We mistake the authority of law for the good: legal authority becomes the equivalent of the moral good, and the question we ask becomes “what does the legally authoritative text tell us to do?” West argues that in the process, the question of the good or evil of a constitutional practice, rule or provision is lost. By asserting that the authoritarian orientation is “amoral” or “agnostic” as to value, West has overlooked the fact that the authoritative text may be perceived as containing the morally good command, however. Indeed, the authoritarian may have a strong moral attachment to the authority of the text and its rightness or goodness.

In a piece on what she terms liberal legal theory, West explores the belief that the Rule of Law, as embodied in the Constitution, is moral. She argues that liberal legalism posits obedience to the totems of the Rule of Law and the Constitution as necessary brakes on human aggression. For liberal legal scholars as diverse as Laurence Tribe and Charles Fried, then, the only solution to state power is obedience to true law; true law is the moral solution to human aggression and therefore deserves unquestioning acceptance and obedience. Thus, for “American legal liberalism the only moral solution to the problem of power is obedience to law. [T]he law that does and should command our obedience is both autonomous from the political process and rich in moral content.” True law is a rich blend of rights and principles that protects individuals from state power and the evil desires of others. Judges, accordingly, must be obedient to the disembodied law. “Judges can obey the command of the totem because morally they must obey,” for otherwise “the community [would] face the unrestrained,

190. West, Authoritarian Impulse, supra note 8; see also Sandel, Moral Argument and Liberal Toleration: Abortion and Homosexuality, 77 CAIF. L. Rev. 521 (1989) (similar point about bracketing of moral discourse in Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113 (1973), and Bowers v. Hardwick, 478 U.S. 186 (1986), but does not reach conclusion that authoritarian).
192. West, Authoritarian Impulse, supra note 8, at 539.
193. Id. at 541.
194. See supra notes 70-71 and accompanying text.
196. Id. at 838-40.
197 Id. at 838.
liberated power of individuals, which is something to fear, not something to celebrate."\textsuperscript{198}

Like Cover, West observes that the interpretivist turn celebrates literary methods, interpretive communities and internal examination of legal texts at the expense of recognizing that law, unlike literature, inflicts violence and pain on real people.\textsuperscript{199} Rather than being merely the use of reason to interpret a pre-existing legal text, "adjudication, including constitutional adjudication, is the creation of law backed by force . . . Adjudication is an act of power, not of cognition."\textsuperscript{200} Objectivists such as Stanley Fish and Ronald Dworkin, who argue that disciplining rules of interpretation or the community’s moral codes supplement the legal text, make a mistake similar to that of conservative natural law theorists. Both create the condition that the law that is becomes the law that ought to be, possibly creating the conditions for authoritarianism.\textsuperscript{201} West uses the novel \textit{Pudd’nhead Wilson} to illustrate why objective interpretation—obedience to an objective, authoritative legal text—does not lead to moral results. That is, use of the community’s conventional morality, as embodied in legal texts, as a reference in interpreting those texts can lead to oppressive results.\textsuperscript{202} West uses \textit{The Floating Opera} to argue that subjective interpretation—the denial that there is any real basis for moral criticism of law or of adjudication—creates the nihilism of power and no way in which to combat it.\textsuperscript{203}

West also criticizes some of the law and literature work of James Boyd White by emphasizing the repressive or punitive result of reducing communities and law to text. If texts are central "to the form and substance of a community’s moral and social life," and "[w]e ought to think and read legal texts, not as political or positive commands, but as texts which both constitute and constrain the community’s moral commitments,"\textsuperscript{204} we lose the ability to criticize legal or "shared constitutive texts" independent of the texts themselves. The shared text, by nature, leads to exclusion and dehumanization of those not included in the textual community as readers, writers or critics.\textsuperscript{205} The discourse of power excludes those it injures, or makes it impossible to communicate that injury to the members of the relevant textual community. If this is so, then constitutive texts can both

\textsuperscript{198} Id. at 877.
\textsuperscript{199} West, \textit{Adjudication is Not Interpretation: Some Reservations About the Law-As-Literature Movement}, 54 TENN. L. REV 203 (1987) [hereinafter West, \textit{Adjudication}].
\textsuperscript{200} Id. at 205.
\textsuperscript{201} "Historically, the consequence of the blending of the law and the moral basis from which we criticize law has almost always been a politically regressive insistence upon the morality of existing power . . ." Id. at 208-09.
\textsuperscript{202} Id. at 219-44.
\textsuperscript{203} Id. at 258-76.
\textsuperscript{204} Id.
\textsuperscript{205} Id. at 140-41.
justify oppression of those who are different and blind members of the community to that oppression. And because the punitive, repressive side of authoritarianism flourishes in an atmosphere of objectification of persons and prejudice, it would seem that the argument from constitutive texts also creates a ground for authoritarianism.

From the work of Cover and West, together with the scholarly work on authoritarianism generally, it is possible to devise a tentative description of the substantively authoritarian problem in law. Descriptively, the authoritarian orientation to law stresses obedience to positive law and rules and takes a punitive or moralistic stance against deviance. It is suspicious both of human nature and of the power of legal actors. The authoritarian emphasizes the need for positive law as a guarantor of predictability, stability and order, regardless of the oppressive consequences. This orientation fears change and frequently insists that law is grounded in traditions and the past—oppressive uses of law are justified because the possibility of alternatives is frightening. The intolerance of ambiguity that characterizes authoritarians is part of this orientation to law. This is not a jurisprudence of formal authoritarianism, that is, of deferential or even blind obedience to accepted traditional authority alone. Instead, it is a jurisprudence of dominance and punishment towards those who are different or deviant.

II. AUTHORITARIAN LEGAL THOUGHT AND DECISIONMAKING

This section discusses legal scholarship about judging and law that creates the conditions for formal authoritarianism, which in turn facilitates substantively authoritarian legal and judicial practices. It then examines some recent Supreme Court decisions that appear to demonstrate the linkage of these ways of thinking about law and judging to substantive authoritarianism. While this section makes no claim that there is a direct, causal connection between the work discussed and the Court's jurisprudence, a claim that would be impossible to prove, this section does emphasize the striking similarities in the reasoning and justifications used by both groups.

Nowhere is an authoritarian orientation more striking than in the theories about proper judicial decisionmaking currently propounded by many scholars and in the actual practice of these theories and arguments by the current Supreme Court. The scholarly approaches to constitutional law and judicial decisionmaking that are authoritarian reflect preoccupations with judicial power, the legitimacy of judicial review and the status of the federal judiciary as unelected and unaccountable to the people. These arguments are hardly original or new; however, this scholarship also projects onto judges particular negative traits, and when its other concerns are examined, appears to

be distinguishable from other American constitutional scholarship. This scholarship emphasizes law as a mechanism of social control through its privileging of predictability, stability and control. There is a portrayal of the judiciary as tyrannical and powerful, unresponsive and always willing to thwart “the people’s” will. Another earmark of this scholarship is its emphasis on obedience to positive law narrowly conceived: there is usually one law or legal authority, one formative intent or text to be obeyed, rather than alternative sources of law, authority and meaning.

The arguments of authoritarian jurisprudence do not break neatly into categories, although they can be separated to some extent. The model of authoritarian jurisprudence as applied to judges proceeds in several dimensions, or perhaps follows a continuum of time from the decisionmaking process to the enforcement of the decision. Authoritarian process arguments oppose judicial discretion of any type and insist on judicial obedience to rules and power. These arguments deny that the judge should ever reach an independent moral judgment. More significant to the issue of authoritarianism is the steadfast refusal of those making obedience arguments to acknowledge that judges frequently can refer to and choose among multiple legal authorities or doctrines rather than having only one narrowly defined positive law rule to obey. Arguments for authoritarian results emphasize the notion that law is an instrument of power and control, and appear to be grounded in a bleak and distrustful vision of human nature.

A weak, formal legal authoritarianism may be endemic to legality, but authoritarianism in a substantive sense not only emphasizes obedience to law but also manifests distrust of judges, insistence on an absolute severance between concern for positive law and justice, and a singular lack of concern with the continuing oppression of individuals. In examining the authoritarian dynamic and effects of representative scholars, this section uses the work of particular authors and their articles as illustrations. This section focuses on the particular visions of law and judging portrayed in the writings and demonstrates how these writings manifest an endorsement of what is, ultimately, substantively authoritarian judging. This section first examines formally authoritarian arguments and their link to substantive authoritarianism. It then examines more explicit substantively authoritarian arguments.

A. Formally Authoritarian Legal Scholarship

The works of Raoul Berger and Robert Bork have often been criticized for their constitutional fundamentalism, their insistence on adherence to the

207. While the arguments of these scholars are not great departures from the norms of legal scholarship, they are distinguishable from the work of other legal scholars who have been labelled authoritarian by commentators. See, e.g., West, Adjudication, supra note 199, at 210-19 (Robin West's characterization of Owen Fiss' invocation of an interpretive community as authoritarian); Michelman, Law's Republic, supra note 8, at 1519-24 (Frank Michelman's characterization of Bruce Ackerman's work as authoritarian).
original intent of the framers, and their similar insistence on obedience to the words and text of the Constitution.\(^{208}\) Although their scholarship is undoubtedly the best known and most influential, there has been a burgeoning number of articles making similar claims since the end of the 1970s.

Richard Kay, for example, is another representative of this line of scholarship, and his arguments, while extreme, reveal its dynamic. Against scholarly objections to the rigidity and antiquity of originalism, Kay posits affirmation of "the values inherent in 'inflexibility'—the values of stability and clarity."\(^{209}\) The moral content of the authoritative command and the moral nature of the authority are of less concern than preservation of the authority itself. Because the Constitution and the framers provided "an answer to the validity of every new thing" and omitted nothing,\(^{210}\) the federal government and the judiciary cannot legitimately do more than the Constitution, so defined, permits. The source of all state authority is the Constitution and the framers, and anything the government does that is not "traceable to the enumerated institutions and powers is an exercise of power contrary to the Constitution."\(^{211}\) The framers meant to bind future generations,\(^{212}\) and the framers' fear of judicial independence and power means that they intended that judges not have "any role as formulators of some values apart from positive law."\(^{213}\) Obedience to positive law is more important than concern with justice or with freedom from law that oppresses. In a statement that reveals how closely linked formally and substantively authoritarian thinking are, Kay argues that "stability and assurance may be more important than the actual content of the substantive rules applied."\(^{214}\) And predictability, control and certainty justify demanding that judges obey the positive law of the formative moment, in spite of the goodness or badness of those laws.\(^{215}\) It is ironic that Kay has argued that judicial deviation from the original intent of the framers would threaten us with totalitarianism,\(^{216}\) given that much of the perceived deviation from originalism in the Warren and Burger eras limited government and private power.

Kay's argument is not particularly subtle. The most subtle of the formally authoritarian constitutional scholars may be Henry Monaghan, who has

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210. Id. at 257 This is a truly God-like vision of the constitutional moment.
211. Id. at 256.
212. Id. at 281.
213. Id. at 283.
214. Id. at 290 (emphasis added).
215. Id. at 291-92.
216. Id. at 290.
AUTHORITARIANISM

shifted ground over time from insisting on origialism, to insisting on obedience, to arguing that, while courts may have to obey precedents that deviate from the original intent, such deviant precedent should never be the ground for future decisions. Rather, future decisions should refer to the original intent or plain textual meaning whenever possible. Monaghan's apparent objective has been to discredit, under the guise of formal authoritarianism, any liberal/progressive arguments for constitutional interpretation directed at ending oppression, ensuring substantive equality or developing constitutional rights for the historically disempowered. For example, Monaghan explicitly attacks as "perfectionist," and hopelessly at odds with the original intent, the constitutional visions of a number of liberal/progressive constitutional scholars, including Paul Brest, Ronald Dworkin, Kenneth Karst, Frank Michelman, Michael Perry, and Laurence Tribe. According to Monaghan, such advocates of judicial activism would allow nullification of the political process by illegitimate means, that is, the use of substantive judicial review.

Monaghan, relying heavily on the works of John Hart Ely and Raoul Berger, argues that the sole source of legitimacy for judicial review of the outcomes of the political processes—in other words, much of law—is judicial inquiry "into the openness and fairness of the political processes." According to Monaghan, because the other branches of government are the ones with the "authority to make law," raising "legitimacy questions for judicial lawmaking," the Court has no authority to "make" law "when the political organs have spoken." While the Court could interpret statutes with reference to visions of political morality, Monaghan argues that the Constitution prohibits the use of such "indeterminate" criteria as "a strong

217. Monaghan, Stare Decisis and Constitutional Adjudication, 88 COLUM. L. REV. 723, 772-73 (1988) [hereinafter Monaghan, Stare Decisis]. Monaghan argues that any doctrinal inconsistency between Bowers v. Hardwick and Roe v. Wade can be explained in terms of original understanding: "Accordingly, even if Roe's rule is preserved, the question whether its reasoning should be extended or is rightly halted in the name of the original understanding presents a quite different issue." Id. at 759.

218. Perfectionists, according to Monaghan, consider the Constitution to be perfect in one central respect: properly construed, the constitution guarantees against the political order most equality and autonomy values which the commentators think a twentieth century Western liberal democratic government ought to guarantee to its citizens. [A] necessary link is asserted between the constitution and currently "valid" notions of rights, equality and distributive justice.


219. Id. at 353-60.
220. Id. at 396.
221. Id. at 353-55.
222. Id. at 356.
223. Id. at 370 (emphasis added).
224. Id.
set of judicially enforceable autonomy. Claims” to invalidate legislation or “to control the contrary determinations of the political process.” Arguments for judicial reference to non-textual sources of rights and principles based on common law models of decisionmaking, in order to promote humane values, fail to treat the Constitution as binding authority or as a positive command. Rejecting what he terms a “common law” approach to constitutional adjudication because it smuggles in “nontextually-grounded principles of political morality,” Monaghan states that, because the Constitution is the master rule of recognition, constitutional legal reasoning should not concern itself with principles, justice, fairness, equality, or political morality. The policy choices of the framers must not be overridden by the Supreme Court. For Monaghan, the “authoritative status” of the written Constitution is the foundation for law. The Constitution should be treated as a “super statute,” a compact “whose contents could not be altered by any organ of government.” The framers’ choices may only be altered by the amendment process and never through adjudication. The authoritative status of the Constitution “is a legitimate matter of debate for political theorists interested in the nature of political obligation,” but the authoritative status of the Constitution’s commands cannot be questioned or tampered with by legal actors. With regard to legal reasoning, which by his definition is neither political nor moral reasoning, the text is binding.

Thus far, this summary of Monaghan’s argument has focused on the formally authoritarian component. On the one hand, the argument emphasizes obedience to revered, long-dead authorities and the founding moment, in the ancient Roman authoritarian sense identified by Arendt. On the other hand, judges must obey the commands of those branches of government that the Constitution made sovereign and cannot take it upon themselves to make law. Judges have no authority independent of positive law, dictated by other sources. This is positivism with a vengeance: The “is” and the “ought” are not only separated by definition, but the ought as a reference, interpretive device, or tool of critique and improvement would disappear entirely from constitutional law.

A substantively authoritarian spin manifests itself in Monaghan’s particular examples of illegitimate Court decisions and illegitimate constitutional theories. The equal protection clause stands only for the extension of “the

225. Id.
226. Id. at 391.
227. Id.
228. Id. at 374.
229. Id. at 392.
230. Id. at 376.
231. Id. at 383.
232. Id. at 84.
233. See supra notes 59-66, 69 and accompanying text.
principle of political equality to blacks.\textsuperscript{234} This political equality is a "thin" one, having nothing to do with the liberal/progressive concern with access to the political process and substantive equality or even the Warren Court's decision in \textit{Brown v. Board of Education}.\textsuperscript{235} Indeed, under Monaghan's theory, \textit{Brown} is an illegitimate decision, because it was out of line with the original intent of the drafters of the fourteenth amendment.\textsuperscript{236} Although the Constitution permits, but does not require, the "political branches" to enact laws expanding individual rights, substantive equality and autonomy, courts are absolutely forbidden to do so.\textsuperscript{237} The ninth and fourteenth amendment privileges and immunities clauses are meaningless, and therefore do not permit judges to create nontextual rights of social equality, privacy and autonomy under the Constitution. Even if the clauses were not superfluous, Monaghan argues that "a showing is necessary that this was not . . . to be a list [of rights] closed as of 1791 or 1868."\textsuperscript{238} Not only are courts prohibited from expanding rights, they also must obey laws promulgated by the other branches that restrict or abolish rights and liberties that are not absolutely traceable to the Constitution. Monaghan's absolute lack of concern with the contemporary goodness or rightness of the framers' commands, or with principled ways judges could combat violence and oppression in the name of law, forces judges to inflect the violence the sovereign demands. In fact, the theory would require the reversal of a number of progressive and liberatory Supreme Court decisions which combatted oppression and domination, including the incorporation of portions of the Bill of Rights.\textsuperscript{239}

Monaghan has abandoned originalism to some extent; history presented him and other originalists with the reality of the radical deviation from the original intent by the other branches of government. The tremendous growth of and change in presidential and executive branch power cannot be reconciled with the framers' intent. For example, the President has laid claim over the years to plenary power over national security,\textsuperscript{240} foreign relations

\begin{itemize}
\item 234. Monaghan, \textit{Perfect}, supra note 218, at 364 (emphasis added).
\item 235. 347 U.S. 483 (1954); see Monaghan, \textit{Perfect}, supra note 218, at 372-73 (criticizing Michelman's argument for providing means of effective political participation to those historically and presently disenfranchised by protecting these groups from systematic bias).
\item 237. Monaghan, \textit{Perfect}, supra note 218, at 396.
\item 238. Id. at 367 (emphasis in original).
\item 239. See Monaghan, \textit{Stare Decisis}, supra note 217, at 732, for an admission of this.
\end{itemize}
and war powers, and cabinet, administrative and judicial appointments. When the Senate has challenged the presidential appointment power pursuant to its constitutional obligation to approve certain presidential appointments, as in the case of the nominations of John Tower and Robert Bork, it encounters shocked criticism. Congressional authority to investigate the Iran-Contra affair was sharply called into question as an illegitimate challenge to presidential authority. The popularity of a president that gives him the political strength to contravene the opinion of a majority on various substantive issues, as was true in the Reagan years, does not legitimate such plenary authority if one is making an argument of deference to majority will as the ground for criticizing the Court. Yet Monaghan is sanguine about the growth of the "Imperial Presidency." Continuing his attack on judicial deviation from the command of the text and framers, Monaghan simply assumes that presidential power is almost plenary, legitimate, and so concentrated and effective that even the theoretically offsetting power of Congress is "no longer descriptively accurate." In fact, he once argued against originalism and plain textual meaning in interpreting presidential power with regard to war powers, indicating an authoritarian agenda aimed specifically at courts. Rather than being troubled by the question of the constitutional legitimacy of the growth in presidential power, Monaghan appears to be concerned only to attack the legitimacy of an ostensible increase in judicial power.

Monaghan's recent work continues to argue that judicial review is illegitimate and that the Court has repeatedly exceeded its authority. Using Roe v. Wade as his stalking horse, he deplores judicial activism.

243. See Ackerman, supra note 242.
244. See W. COHEN & G. MITCHELL, supra note 118, at 289-94.
247. Monaghan, Stare Decisis, supra note 217, at 739.
249. See Monaghan, Stare Decisis, supra note 217
251. The article is full of suggestions on how the Court might overrule Roe. See Monaghan, Stare Decisis, supra note 217, at 746-48, 751, 754, 759; see also Monaghan, Perfect, supra note 218, at 381.
Monaghan argues for confining the Supreme Court within a “conservative” scheme of law. Conceding that Brown should not be overruled even if it violated original intent, he still wishes to “freeze” henceforth the Court’s constitutional decisionmaking powers. Some decisions, such as Brown and the reapportionment cases, might not be reversible because although they violate original intent, the values of “consistency, coherence, fairness, equality, predictability and efficiency” may require their retention. As to decisions that he claims have gone beyond constitutional text or authority, however, stare decisis can be justified “only to prevent disruption of practices and expectations so settled, or to avoid the revitalization of a public debate so divisive, that departure from the precedent would contribute in some perceptible way to a failure of confidence in the lawfulness of fundamental features of the political order.” He leaves unexplained how the Court is to determine whether such conditions exist in a given case. Monaghan simply asserts that stare decisis must “operate to keep issues off the constitutional, if not the political agenda, thereby leaving open for debate only less threatening issues.” This appears to contradict his argument that it is illegitimate for the Court to decide issues of public value or general welfare, but it also suggests a substantively authoritarian vision. As Robert Cover demonstrated, the manipulation of jurisdiction by courts—a method of keeping issues off the constitutional agenda—has been used to perpetuate government oppression. Arguing, as Monaghan does, that the Court is required to keep decisive issues off its agenda would make it impossible for the Court to consider cases involving oppression, because it is by definition divisive and disruptive to tell oppressors that they can no longer oppress.

Monaghan justifies authoritarian decisionmaking in yet another way, and this justification appears to lead even more directly to substantively authoritarian uses of law. The principle of stare decisis, for Monaghan, embodies a Rule of Law virtue by requiring the Court to be bound by

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252. Although Monaghan states in a footnote that he means “Burkean” conservatism, Monaghan, Stare Decisis, supra note 217, at 752 n.165, he never explains what he means by that term. For an analysis of Burke and constitutional adjudication, see Wilson, supra note 5.

253. His argument in support of upholding Brown seems to be historically inaccurate; he writes that the decision was “probably the Supreme Court’s only legitimate response to the nation’s escalating moral and social turmoil.” Monaghan, Stare Decisis, supra note 217, at 772. But at the time Brown was argued and decided, there was no more turmoil than usual: Brown itself triggered turmoil, and actions like the Montgomery Bus Boycott arose at the same time as Brown, not before. See T. Branch, Parting the Waters (1988); R. Kluger, Simple Justice (1976); Dudziak, Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative, 41 Stan. L. Rev. 61 (1989).

254. Monaghan, Stare Decisis, supra note 217, at 745.

255. Id. at 748.

256. Id. at 750.

257. Id.
law,\textsuperscript{258} by which he means pre-existing law.\textsuperscript{259} The main function of stare decisis appears to legitimate Court decisions in the eyes of the "reasoning classes" and "elites."\textsuperscript{260} The agenda-limiting function of stare decisis is the means to avoid "radical and even revolutionary attacks on the legal status quo,"\textsuperscript{261} apparently necessary to preserve the interests of the reasoning classes and elites. For the Court to take it upon itself to remove from constitutional debate fundamental constitutional conflicts in the interests of the reasoning classes and perceived stability, however, seems as arrogant and undemocratic as the Court's interpreting the Constitution expansively or progressively.

Combined with an endorsement of plenary presidential power and an argument that the Court's legitimacy is determined by elites, Monaghan's argument would support a substantively authoritarian government in the United States. If the Court need only justify itself and respond to (power) elites, then the Rule of Law embodied in the Constitution need not concern itself with anything other than the concerns of an existing power elite and its interests in stability and predictability. Such thinking would support the capture of the judiciary by ruling elites as a legitimate mechanism of government. And capture of such institutions as the judiciary is a characteristic of authoritarian governments.\textsuperscript{262}

Another common argument in legal scholarship centers more generally on judicial obedience to rules and texts. While the "ruleness of rules" argument may mask authoritarian tendencies, or even be useful to anti-authoritarian causes,\textsuperscript{263} the substantively authoritarian danger lurking within the formally authoritarian nature of rule-boundedness becomes clear in the work of Frederick Schauer. Although Schauer does not consider the framers' intent relevant, he, like Monaghan, would require absolute judicial obedience to the constitutional text. Schauer has similarly argued that a common law method of elaborating constitutional meaning is inapplicable when "the rule is . . . set forth in a fixed canonical form in an authoritative text,"\textsuperscript{264} such as the Constitution. "In many respects the Constitution acts as a rule, rigidly demanding of decisionmakers that they exclude from consideration

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{258} Id. at 752.
\item \textsuperscript{259} Id. at 750. Ironically, the argument that divisive issues should be kept off the constitutional agenda by means of stare decisis principles could support a Court refusing to overrule \textit{Roe v. Wade}. See Olsen, \textit{Unraveling Compromise}, 103 Harv. L. Rev 105 (1989).
\item \textsuperscript{260} Monaghan, \textit{Stare Decisis, supra} note 217, at 749.
\item \textsuperscript{261} Id. at 750 (quoting Powell, \textit{Parchment Matters: A Meditation on the Constitution as Text}, 71 Iowa L. Rev 1427, 1433 (1986)).
\item \textsuperscript{262} See A. Perlmutter, \textit{supra} note 18, at 179-84.
\item \textsuperscript{263} See, e.g., Wilson, \textit{The Morality of Formalism}, 33 UCLA L. Rev 31 (1985).
\end{itemize}
certain potentially morally and politically relevant features of the case before them.265

Schauer's vision of the world appears to be a Hobbesian "war of all against all" that must be controlled through obedience to legal commands. He has recently explicitly relied on the Hobbesian vision to justify his argument that the "rule" of the first amendment is

a principle of distrust, an embodiment of a Hobbesian view of the world. Why would the "slippery slope" and its associated metaphors figure so prominently in free speech discourse were there not some specially close relationship between a theory of free speech and a theory of governmental and judicial distrust?266

For Schauer, rules are good because they provide an almost absolute mechanism of predictability and control, as well as control over untrustworthy judges and other legal actors. Predictability is more important than flexibility; obedience to rules is more important than justice. Rules, and the words and texts that describe them, are usually absolutely determinate in meaning and can and must be obeyed. Reference to normative reasons for rules is not rule-following, and rule-following is what judges must do, because judges must be controlled.

Suspicion of judges runs throughout Schauer's work as a justification for rules as trumps. He has frequently written that while rules may interfere with justice, they may "restrict misguided, incompetent, wicked, power-hungry, or simply mistaken decisionmakers whose own sense of the good might diverge from that of the system they serve,"267 and that although "[i]n attempting to disable wicked, misguided, or simply incompetent decisionmakers from doing wrong, rules also disable wise, well-intentioned, and capable decisionmakers from reaching the optimal results in individual instances,"268 rules are essential as "barriers to the . . . evil and dangerous."269 His arguments for obedience to rules employ scare tactics in a number of places. Do we want Oliver North deciding the meaning of separation of powers? Do we want a recurrence of the Lochner Court?270 But as J.M. Balkin has observed, "[i]f we are ruled by law, we are ruled

265. Id. at 49.
268. Schauer, Rules, the Rule of Law and the Constitution, 6 CONST. COMMENTARY 69, 69 (1989) [hereinafter Schauer, Rules].
269. Schauer, Text and Rule, supra note 264, at 50.
270. To those who question the bindingness of constitutional rules, Schauer asks if we are willing to have the cop on the beat interpret Miranda (which she does frequently, whether Schauer thinks we like it or not) or Oliver North interpret separation of powers. Schauer, Rules, supra note 268, at 79. This scare tactic argument isn't persuasive, and it is extremely rigid and authoritarian in its own right. That is, it denies anyone the capacity to interpret a democratic document.
by texts, and if we are ruled by texts, we are ruled by readings of texts." 271 Those texts can be "misread" or read in such a way as to embody authoritarian precepts if the interpreter is herself authoritarian, or if she has an authoritarian view of law. Thus rules are less of a restraint on the wicked judge than Schauer would have us believe.

The abuse of power through demanding slavish adherence to rules is of little moment to Schauer. Instead, what he terms "particularism"—which variously means unrestrained passion, common-law methods, balancing and reference to different doctrines and rules—is the source of all danger. 272 For Schauer, the overriding threat to stability is created by permitting judges "flexibility, adaptability to changing circumstances, empathy, and the other benefits of particularistic adjudication." 273 Much of his argument for formalism and obedience to rules appears to be an authoritarian response to the writings of feminist and humanist scholars who have urged consideration of the contextual, human and painful aspects of a decision. 274 Schauer frequently has rhetorical recourse to the parade of horribles to support his claim that we must have rigid rules and avoid particularism. 275 "Context" and "sympathy" mean the abandonment of rationality and principled decisionmaking. Particularism would mean that the Nazis would have been denied their first amendment right to march in Skokie, because emotion would have overridden thought. The guilt of the accused would affect the outcome of criminal procedure decisions, which it has in any case, despite Professor Schauer's belief in rules. 276 Unprincipled, biased, arbitrary or tyrannical decisionmaking is obviously a concern for all legal scholars, but there is no basis for Schauer's conflation of particularism with morally horrible, repressive results or for his confusion of particularism with out-of-control emotionalism or hysteria. The basis for such conflation appears to be a negative view of human nature, a belief that all emotion is bad and irrational, and an authoritarian rejection of the imaginative and compassionate. 277 Empathic and responsible decisions do not require abandonment


272. Schauer, Kalven, supra note 266, at 412-14.


274. He has specifically cited Michelman, Traces, supra note 206 and Henderson, Legality, supra note 33, as representatives. Id. at 48 n.21; see also Minow, supra note 33; K. Karst, supra note 33.

275. Schauer, Kalven, supra note 266, at 397, 407-08, 413-14.


of principle, balance or arbitrariness.278

Control is the other authoritarian theme in Schauer's work. Law and rules exist for control of otherwise unrestrained—and dangerous—passion and the terrible uncertainties of existence. Legal institutions should exist as "stabilizers and breaks," and they are necessary "institutions of restraint."279 Only absolute obedience to rules and the denial of affectivity in deciding cases protects us from uncertainty and abuse. Schauer argues that categorical thinking, constraint and rule-following are all preferable to responsiveness. Predictability is in itself "desirable,"280 and "suboptimal results" are tolerable in order to provide standardization and maintenance of what he terms the "principle" of stability.281 To illustrate the need for certainty, Schauer employs the hypothetical example of a faculty considering the case of a student seeking an excused absence from an examination to attend the funeral of his sister. Because it may be impossible to find a principled rule-category covering requests for excuses in the case of deaths arising in the future, as it is difficult to "distinguish" significant deaths and losses, a rule prohibiting excuses to attend any funerals may be justified, even if it is suboptimal.282 Resigned acceptance of suboptimality and the human pain it entails is necessary to preserve the value he places on precedent and rules.

In a recent article, Schauer again argues for emphasizing "predictability, stability, and constraint of decisionmakers commonly associated with decision according to rule" in legal thought.283 His vision of decision according to rule always assumes that only one rule governs a case. The only alternative is reference to something that is not a rule. His denial of multiple applicable rules reflects a simplistically authoritarian view of law and rule-bound decisionmaking. Schauer prefers judicial obedience to narrowly interpreted

278. Unrestrained emotionalism is not inevitable and to characterize the scholarship in this way reflects a bias of considerable proportions. See Brennan, Reason, Passion, and "The Progress of the Law", 10 CARDOZO L. REV. 3 (1988); Henderson, The Dialogue of Heart and Head, 10 CARDOZO L. REV. 123 (1988); Henderson, Legality, supra note 33; Minow, supra note 33; Minow & Spelman, Passion for Justice, 10 CARDOZO L. REV. 37 (1988); see also infra notes 504-17 and accompanying text.
280. Id. at 597.
281. Id. at 601.
282. Id. at 590. In another bizarre passage, Schauer says that the burden of showing a compelling interest in race-classification cases was inapplicable in Korematsu v. United States, 323 U.S. 214 (1944): "But once that obligation [to show a compelling state interest] is created, it may be possible, as in Korematsu, for the state to provide such a special justification, such as the exigencies of war, based on reasons that themselves cannot be described in terms of a classification based on race." Id. at 593 (emphasis in original). This is an incredible use of a tragic case; history has demonstrated that there was no threat and that the internment of Japanese Americans was racist. See JUSTICE DELAYED (P Irons ed. 1988); Matsuda, Reparations, supra note 34.
283. Schauer, Formalism, supra note 267, at 547.
commands, and the potential for repressive, oppressive or evil outcomes to
the alternative of capitulation to tyrannical judges. "To be formalistic
is to say something is not my concern, no matter how compelling it may
seem." This is "modesty" rather than moral irresponsibility or moral
obtuseness. To avoid the obvious objection that his vision would render
drastic commands mere conduits for oppression, he suggests that we think of judging
in terms of "presumptive formalism," but his attachment to rule-bound
obedience remains strong. He posits only one "escape route that allowed
some results to be avoided when their consequences would be especially
outrageous." It is unclear what would be "especially outrageous" under
Schauer's theory, and in any event, he goes on to write that even the
"especially outrageous" standard might be bad because "it would diminish
the amount of ruleness by placing more final authority in the decisionmaker
than in the rule."

The authoritarian currents of mistrust of people generally and judges in
particular, the demand for absolute obedience to absolute rules, and the
concern for predictability and control at the expense of concern for op-
pression and violence all render Schauer's scholarship formally authoritarian
with substantively authoritarian elements.

B. Substantive Authoritarianism in Legal Thought

Some forms of legal scholarship are more overtly authoritarian, containing
substantively authoritarian elements as part of their foundation. The work
of Judge Richard Posner and the work of "civic republican" scholars
contains substantively authoritarian elements. Across a number of dimen-
sions, Posner's work is the most explicitly authoritarian in current American
legal thought. Accordingly, this section first seeks to explicate Posner's
authoritarianism and then examines the substantively authoritarian danger
presented by the civic republicans.

Posner's work has been prodigious and influential. It has ranged from
economic interpretations of law, to law and literature, to jurisprudence. His
willingness to explore other fields of thought and legal scholarship has left
him strangely untouched, however. Ultimately, he returns to the same
themes of suspicion of human nature, law as an instrument of social control,
the necessity of obedience to authority, and dismissal of human suffering.
Posner has bemoaned what he perceives to be a loss of respect for authority

284. Id. at 543.
285. Id. at 547.
286. Id. at 543.
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(including legal authority), has defined authority and law as power and nothing more, and has repeatedly indicated an indifference to, if not a punitive attitude toward, human suffering. The tone of Posner's writings and the scholarship he relies on to support his arguments often suggest that his views of human nature and law reflect a substantively authoritarian bent. As a result, several scholars have noted that some of his work is authoritarian.288 In the introduction to his latest work, The Problems of Jurisprudence, he writes that the book "will provoke . . . the political activists who want to move the law sharply to the left or to the right. It will be criticized by the Left as authoritarian and complacent, and by the Right as cynical and amoral."289 Despite his effort to discredit his critics, however, the book more clearly reveals the very authoritarianism he seeks to deny. Posner relies heavily on sociobiological and "vulgar" Darwinist theories of human nature to justify his arguments against a wide range of jurisprudential positions and for a Chicago-school economic approach to law. Social Darwinism combined with laissez-faire economics has characterized a number of American right-wing authoritarian movements,290 thus, at a minimum, linking Posner's thought to the political history of authoritarianism.

For Posner, the state of nature, "red in tooth and claw," would actually exist without law. Life would indeed be the Hobbesian nightmare as people, driven by impulse, would play life out on a number of revenge themes,291 making real the portrayal of life as nasty, brutish and short. Without law, the social chaos of the war of all against all is inevitable. Law is civilization's answer to never-ending revenge; it is revenge constrained.292 Law is the answer to the Hobbesian threat because it demands obedience and compliance; any other alternative is sentimental, deluded "romanticism."293 According to Posner, justice, the virtue of law, is itself rooted in a Hobbesian-Darwinian world of revenge and survival:

Stressing the primitive character of corrective and retributive justice—the roots of these concepts in behavior having plausible sociobiological interpretations—is a necessary corrective to the common belief that Aristotelian and Kantian ideas of justice are more "moral" than pragmatic and instrumental views. Although Aristotle and Kant obviously had no opportunity to read The Origin of Species, their ideas about

288. See, e.g., Weisberg, supra note 287; West, Authority, supra note 180; West, Law, Literature, and the Celebration of Authority, 83 Nw U.L. Rev. 977 (1989); West, Submission, Choice, and Ethics: A Rejoinder to Judge Posner, 99 Harv L. Rev 1499 (1986).
292. Id. at 25-33.
293. Id.
remedial justice—the justice of sanctions for transgression—are rooted in a view of human nature, as quintessentially vengeful, that is highly compatible with a Darwinian view.\textsuperscript{294}

Even "rights," in Dworkin's strong sense of having a right such that it would be wrong to interfere with its exercise, are based in selfish, competitive human nature:

"[R]ights" is a primitive rather than a sophisticated concept. The sense we all have of having certain rights it would be wrong to deprive us of is a primitive feature of our psychological make up—one as well developed in children and in the inhabitants of primitive societies as it is in modern American adults, and found in animals as well. Survival in a competitive environment requires some minimum sense of the essential things that are one's own to keep or dispose of as one will, and of a readiness to fight for this control. The creature that does not feel a sense of moralistic indignation when another creature seeks to take from it the things that are essential to its survival is not likely to survive and reproduce, so there will be a selection in favor of creatures genetically endowed with such a sense.\textsuperscript{295}

Posner conflates rights with survival and is apparently concerned only with property rights and rights against physical aggression. But it is easy to demonstrate that the strong rights such as freedom of expression, which are considered important by Dworkin and other rights theorists, have little to do with species survival, historically or at present; people survive physically in tyrannical cultures without freedom of speech. Posner's statement is not only a gross oversimplification of the meaning of rights, but also empirically suspect in terms of our knowledge of developmental psychology, anthropology, history, and biology.

Posner's view of human nature, while consistently negative, is supported by inconsistent claims. At times, Posner seems to believe that human beings are driven by impulse and genetics—he appears to have adopted his own version of Freud’s Helmholtzian drive theory, without the ego. For example, he has asserted, without citing authority, that "most human choices are determined by preferences that have their roots in instinct—the instinct to survive, the instinct to reproduce."\textsuperscript{296} At other times, he appears to endorse sociobiology wholeheartedly as a science of human behavior "attested by sober philosophers of science."\textsuperscript{297} As a result of his interest—and faith—in

\textsuperscript{294} R. Posner, Jurisprudence, supra note 129, at 331.
\textsuperscript{295} Id. (footnote omitted).


\textsuperscript{297} R. Posner, Jurisprudence, supra note 129, at 332. Posner fails to cite any of the scientific criticisms of sociobiology's claims, preferring to suggest that objections to the field are political. For works Posner could have cited, see P. Kitcher, Vaulting Ambition (1985) (philosophical critique); Gould, Cardboard Darwinism, N.Y Review of Books 33 (Sept. 25, 1986); Gould, Biological Potential vs. Biological Determinism, in The Sociobiology Debate 344 (A. Caplan ed. 1978); Hubbard, The Political Nature of "Human Nature", in Theoretical Perspectives on Sex Difference 63 (D. Rhode ed. 1990).
sociobiological claims, Posner almost casually asserts a number of startling propositions about humans. He states, for example, that a belief in free will or freedom of choice is an illusion with “survival value” that “may be hard-wired into our brains.” Yet, the notion of free will or freedom of choice is a Western one; apparently non-Western humans—and Western humans for most of their history—have survived and flourished without this genetic illusion.

At still other times Posner appears to be a reductionistic behaviorist. He asserts that concepts such as mind, intent and presumably, self are the products of our ignorance about phenomena rather than real entities. This assertion, of course, is nothing new in thought; rather, it is the conclusion that Posner draws from this observation that is authoritarian. He opines, “‘Economic’ man, [sic] . . . is a person whose behavior is completely determined by incentives; his rationality is no different from that of a pigeon or a rat. The economic task from the perspective of wealth maximization is to influence his incentives so as to maximize his output.” At yet other times, his view of human nature is that of selfish individualism. In his book on jurisprudence, he uses John Mackie to critique communitarian and feminist theories of morality. According to Posner’s summary of Mackie, such theories “cut . . . against the genetic grain; we are selfish, individualistic animals . . . .” This easy declaration should make one shudder; it ignores the fact that individualism as we understand it did not even arise until the Enlightenment. People in numerous cultures and contexts would not even understand the concept of atomistic individualism. And, finally, there is his view of humans as driven to retaliation and revenge against one another, in what would, without law, be a never-ending blood feud.

In addition to his reduction of philosophical systems to the probable outcome of sociobiological species survival, Posner has appropriated philosophical notions of “practical reason” and “pragmatism” and redefined or exaggerated their aspects to support his arguments for wealth maximization and scientific law and judicial decisionmaking. He observes that judicial choice is always a result of practical reason and pragmatic choice, which certainly seems reasonable, although it is difficult, given his view of human nature, to know who or what is exercising the choice. Posner correctly observes that rules are not absolute in the way that Schauer views

298. R. POSNER, JURISPRUDENCE, supra note 129, at 178.
299. Id. at 868.
300. R. POSNER, JURISPRUDENCE, supra note 129, at 382 (emphasis added).
301. Id. at 417.
them and that judges do make—and have to make—their own policy decisions. But the pragmatic Posnerian judge will have recourse to science—read microeconomic theory—in interpreting rules and deciding cases, as opposed to hopelessly muddled political or moral considerations. Moreover, because law is a mechanism of social control, the more the judge knows about cause and effect, the more rigorously she can use law to control human behavior.\textsuperscript{303} Behaviorism is the referent: Posner asserts that predicting human behavior is usually accurately and easily accomplished, but does not acknowledge the vast literature contradicting his claim.\textsuperscript{304}

Certainly Posner’s view of human nature is negative and reflects an ideology compatible with right-wing authoritarian thought. But one could argue, as Posner himself does, that because of his absolute dedication to free markets and choice, he is far from being an authoritarian. Economic theory and libertarianism of the Posnerian variety is what guarantees us all freedom from oppression. Although this argument is inconsistent with his arguments about manipulation of behavior and about law as social control and constrained revenge, Posner does not address the inconsistency. Rather, he is a self-proclaimed “classic liberal,” one of the least likely authoritarian figures.\textsuperscript{305} Government is the power to fear; it must be minimal, and should regulate no more than absolutely necessary\textsuperscript{306} Further, as a “libertarian,” Posner consistently raises the spectre of direct government oppression, overlooking the possibility of authoritarian oppression due to government omission or the government’s active or passive support of the dominance

\textsuperscript{303} Posner, \textit{Skepticism, supra} note 299, at 868-71.

\textsuperscript{304} Id. at 871. Posner blithely asserts that “[p]arents, economists, psychologists, marriage counselors, and probation officers all have the experience of being able to predict correctly what another person will do even when the person himself is genuinely undecided” and cites Hume as support for the proposition. \textit{Id.} Although it is true that we all might have the experience of accurately predicting what someone will do, there are countless times when we predict inaccurately.

\textsuperscript{305} His response to Robin West’s critical review of \textit{Law and Literature, supra} note 291, is telling. In some of the great run-on sentences in law review history, Posner uses selective quotes and irony to argue that he is a libertarian, not an authoritarian. Posner, \textit{Gregor Samsa Replies}, 83 Nw. U.L. Rev 1022, 1024 (1989). His response is both humorous and angry: “If only we realized that the “rule of law,” and the market, and prisons and police, and convention, and differences among persons in aptitude and character, and the bourgeois values, and prudence, and asking students questions in class, and the monuments of Western civilization (including that reactionary sexist work, the \textit{Nicomachean Ethics}), and maturity and professionalism and expertise and respect and tradition, and, in just two words, institutions and constraints, or, in a single word, “liberalism,” were all just so much authoritarian bullshit—then we could get on with the task (and it’s a lot easier than you think) of building a warm, loving, caring, open, hopeful, hugging, unmediated, hierarchy-free, prelinguistic, empathic, affective (but not sentimental—liberals are sentimental), happy, herbivorous, weaponless, whole-grain, solar-powered, polymorphously perverse, classless, Utopian society for the Whole Human Family.” \textit{Id.} at 1025 (footnote omitted) (emphasis in original).

\textsuperscript{306} Posner, \textit{A Reply, supra} note 296, at 1431-42, 1447.
by powerful elites over others. Posner’s interpretation of libertarianism, with its obsessive focus on government power, seems to destroy his ability to acknowledge state-permitted infliction of human pain and oppression. He would not see a problem with the perpetuation of racism in the private sphere or with the private violence against women and children that are the result of government inaction or complicity. Because the authoritarian state has to rely on others to help it maintain control, Posner’s avowed dedication to libertarianism is suspect.

The more substantively authoritarian attitudes supporting Posner’s arguments are clear in his tone and characterization of problems. Posner has written that rape is the result of an inefficient market for sex. He has stated that battered wives stay in the battering relationship, because staying married is value-maximizing: if there is no better alternative in the marketplace to being beaten, the choice is rational. There are, of course, alternatives, including enforcing criminal statutes, taking the crime as seriously as we do other assaults, providing support and counselling for battered women and battering men and so forth. But this might involve government action and expenditure, which leads Posner to prefer the injustice of omission and the resulting perpetuation of violence against women in the United States to the alternative of government assistance. Posner states, “We ought to be wary about embracing a system in which government breaks up families to protect wives against themselves.” Taking seriously the crimes of battery and assault with serious bodily injury does not logically entail “breaking up families,” and blaming the victim of abuse manifests a complete failure of human understanding, empathy or compassion on Posner’s part.

Posner’s opinion in the DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services, a child abuse case, also demonstrates his authoritarian

307. Posner, of course, is not alone here. See K. Karst, supra note 33, at 75 (discussing Alexander Bickel’s criticism of the Warren Court as “planting the seed of tyranny”). As Karst observes, however, the private violence and discrimination of the KKK and Jim Crow practices “acquired the influence of a pseudogovernment.” Id. Thus, oppression is maintained with government complicity.


309. Posner, A Reply, supra note 296, at 1444 (“If she stays, it may be because, all things considered, the feasible alternatives are even worse.”).

310. See Littleton, supra note 23, at 52-56.

311. For a general discussion of injustice, see Shklar, supra note 15.

312. Posner, A Reply, supra note 296, at 1445 (emphasis added).

313. Perhaps one could demonstrate that the lost work time, the neglect of children, and the ultimate homicides that result in many battering cases are so costly that they are not wealth-maximizing to society, however.

314. 812 F.2d 298 (7th Cir. 1987), aff’d, 489 U.S. 189 (1989).
attitude and illustrates his beliefs. In *DeShaney*, a mother sued the State of Wisconsin for damages under section 1983 for reckless failure to take action to protect a child whom state social workers knew was being beaten by his father. In an opinion holding that there was no cause of action, Posner wrote that “the state’s failure to protect people from private violence is not a deprivation of constitutionally protected property or liberty.”

Consistent with his libertarian position, Posner asserted that the minimal state was commanded by the framers of the Constitution, yet the state becomes so minimal for Posner as to be virtually nonexistent: “The Constitution is a charter of negative rather than positive liberties with few exceptions, and “[t]he state does not have a duty enforceable by the federal courts to maintain a police force or a fire department, or to protect children from their parents.” This leaves Posner’s vision of the purpose of the state—or law—unclear, to say the least; even Nozick’s minimal state recognizes the need for a police force. If law and the state exist to prevent private vengeance, the state should have a duty to protect against private vengeance and violence. This contradiction may be more understandable in light of Posner’s expressed attitudes to human suffering. In *DeShaney*, Posner cited an 1898 case on causation, reasoning that because Joshua DeShaney would have sustained the injuries if the state department of social services had never existed, the state’s involvement did not increase the probability of injury to him in any non-trivial sense; the state did not cause the risk to Joshua; and no special relationship between the state and Joshua was created by awareness that the child was in danger. In what appears to be a terribly callous way of stating a point, Posner wrote, “The men who framed the original Constitution and the fourteenth amendment were worried about government’s oppressing the citizenry rather than about its failing to provide adequate social services.”

Posner’s punitive attitude to society’s “losers,” his breezy dismissals of human suffering, and his obsessive preoccupation with “the government” as the sole source of abuses of power and oppression, rather than an agent that can either oppress or liberate, seems to reflect a substantively authoritarian outlook. Moreover, an amoral jurisprudence focused on economic science and power can easily become authoritarian; when combined both with a fundamentally suspicious and unsympathetic view of human nature and a view of law as a mechanism of control, it is substantively authoritarian. Holmes, to

315. *Id.* at 301.
316. *Id.*
317. *Id.* (emphasis added).
319. *DeShaney*, 812 F.2d at 302 (citing Weeks v. McNulty, 101 Tenn. 495, 48 S.W. 809 (1898)).
320. *Id.* at 301.
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Posner the most pragmatic of judges and one worthy of emulation,321 deferred to power and science because he felt no moral engagement.322 Posner's world is very similar to Holmes' world at its worst.

In contrast to the extreme individualism present in Posner's work, a relatively recent strand of constitutional scholarship emphasizes the primacy of the community and argues for restoring civic virtue and participatory democracy in constitutional law. The civic republican scholarship may be, in part, a reaction to the atomism in certain liberal theories, to the Posnerian view of the world as populated by non-altruistic, self-interested individuals, or to a perceived breakdown of social solidarity and dissatisfaction with late twentieth-century liberalism in the United States.323 Scholars also have responded to the connection thesis and ethic of care developed in feminist thought324 and to a renewed concern with conceptions of the good, or virtues, in political life.325 Community, belonging, caring for, and responsibility to others are important to anti-authoritanism and human fulfillment and had been overlooked by many legal and moral scholars. Unfortunately, the history of the republican tradition in the United States is one of intolerance and xenophobia; if historically-oppressed people are skeptical of the argument for the republican tradition, it is for a reason.326


323. Fallon, What is Republicanism, and is it Worth Reviving?, 102 HARV. L. REV. 1695, 1695-97 (1989). For a sociological work making the argument against atomism in the context of the white, upper middle-class, see R. Bellah, R. Madsen, W Sullivan, A. Swidler & S. Tipton, Habits of the Heart (1985); and Harding, Toward a Darkly Radiant Vision of America's Truth, CROSS CURRENTS (Spring 1987) (criticism for omission of people of color from study). For the argument from political philosophy, see M. Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (1982); and Sandel, supra note 190. For the argument in political theory, see B. Barber, Strong Democracy (1984). Another influential work has been MacIntyre's argument for restoration of Aristotelian virtues in moral thinking, with appropriate historical updates, in A. MacIntyre, After Virtue (2d ed. 1984). The emphasis this scholarship places on "community" may stand for our wistful desire to return to a past Golden Age of certainty, belonging, civility and care—an age that never has existed for everyone; a desire for an ideal nurturing family that never was; or a desire to overcome the social isolation, groundlessness and uncertainty of life in the United States in the post-modern (and post-hegemonic?) era. Certainty, belonging, civility and care are all important to human beings, but so are change, conflict and growth. To the extent that the desire to have certainty and belonging can lead to authoritarian conformity, the civic republicanism scholarship creates a real risk of substantive authoritarianism.

324. 'The connection thesis is West's term used to identify feminist thought emphasizing women's connection to other persons. West, Jurisprudence and Gender, 55 U. Chi. L. Rev. 1 (1988). The interrelationship of individuals as a criteria for moral thought emerged from C. Gilligan, In a Different Voice (1982).

325. See A. MacIntyre, supra note 323.

In rushing to rescue notions of community and cooperation from the jaws of selfish individualism, civic republican scholarship often argues for conditions that would facilitate substantive authoritarianism. The substantively authoritarian danger can arise in communitarianism either by abandoning individuals or by failing to perceive the need for empathy with those who differ from ourselves.327

Phillip Selznick has noted that "a communitarian morality ... is not at its core a philosophy of liberation. The central value is not freedom or independence but belonging." As Kenneth Karst has so eloquently argued, belonging to communities is important to us all, but the "community" will not incorporate new people without conflict and struggle. Indeed, the "civic conception" of law and the "participatory ideal" can quickly justify a lack of compassion toward, or the continued oppression of, those not belonging. To the extent the community's values trump the liberal concerns for individual dignity and rights, the threat of substantive authoritarianism increases.

The civic republican scholarship raises this danger in several ways. First, there have been arguments that the community's good supersedes the individual's good. Second, the notion of encouraging virtue based on a teleological view of human progress has historically justified conventionalist, conformist tendencies that can produce substantive authoritarianism. Third, and related to encouraging virtue, the notion of a public life in which all engage in discussing political issues assumes a shared discourse and values that can be exclusionary.

Suzanna Sherry has written that the civic republican ideal "exalts the good of the whole over the good of its individual members." Professor Sunstein has written that the republican ideal includes a "willingness of citizens to subordinate their private interests to the general good." Yet, the question of the public good as opposed to private interests or pressures is left tantalizingly unanswered. This omission is unfortunate, for quite obviously the definition of public good historically has been determined by powerful and dominant elites, and it can easily be corrupted into conformism, intolerance and moralism. It is not madly libertarian—or original—to note that without some narrowing definition of the community good,

327. See K. KARST, supra note 33; infra text accompanying notes 513-15.
329. Id. at 189-96.
330. Id. at 215.
331. Id. at 215.
332. Sherry, supra note 328, at 456-57
333. Sunstein, supra note 328, at 551.
335. Id. at 52.
336. See, e.g., Abrams, supra note 326.
exalting the good of the whole over individuals can easily justify repression and substantive authoritarianism.\textsuperscript{336}

Perhaps Sherry's writings most clearly demonstrate the dangers of emphasizing the community good in civic republicanism. In her effort to equate civic republican ideals with a "feminine vision," Sherry sought to explain the early jurisprudence of Justice O'Connor as embodying proper "communitarian" ideals. Justice O'Connor's "conservative" willingness to agree with cases limiting the fourth and fifth amendment rights of criminal defendants is explicable for Sherry because the community trumps the individual defendant in such cases: "If the community is more important than individual rights, it is quite predictable that Justice O'Connor would be a strong law and order proponent: she will protect the community from crime even at the expense of the individual rights of criminal defendants."\textsuperscript{337}

Of course, "protecting the community from crime" can be a justification for a number of substantively authoritarian, coercive practices, including police detention and "rousting" of African-Americans in white suburbs and the government internment of members of "suspect" groups. To rebut that suggestion, perhaps, Sherry has argued that Justice O'Connor's communitarian view encompasses ""[d]ismantling the barriers erected by race discrimination or religious favoritism,"" because those barriers prevent individuals from exercising their ""right"" to full community membership.\textsuperscript{338} But this ""right"" does not connect directly to civic virtue notions of politics that require shared values and discourse.\textsuperscript{339}

Sherry has also argued that the feminine vision is concerned with ensuring public morality at the expense of pluralism and tolerance. Thus, the feminine point of view is that ""[p]ornography conveys a view of women that is simply immoral.""\textsuperscript{340} The reason why this view of women is immoral, however, could rest on a number of conventionalist or oppressive assumptions about sexuality and women, not upon the radical feminist proposition that pornography is immoral because it harms women. At another point, Sherry conflates a ""caring"" society with a ""virtuous"" one and then resorts to ""tolerance"" as a virtue that will constrain the state from coercively

\textsuperscript{336} See, e.g., Herzog, Some Questions for Republicans, 14 Pol. Theory 473 (1986); Horwitz, Republicanism and Liberalism in American Constitutional Thought, 29 Wm. & Mary L. Rev. 57, 67 (1987).

\textsuperscript{337} Sherry, supra note 31, at 604. For a discussion of the perspective offered by female judges, see Sherry, The Gender of Judges, 4 Law & Inequality 159 (1986). Sherry's vision also overlooks the fact that the community itself may have an interest in protection from unmonitored coercive force, and thus it is not inevitable that a person with communitarian concerns would become less concerned with protections against government force.

\textsuperscript{338} Sherry, supra note 337, at 166.

\textsuperscript{339} See infra text accompanying notes 343-49.

\textsuperscript{340} Sherry, supra note 337, at 166.
enforcing a vision of the good life.\textsuperscript{341} Caring, responsiveness and connection are important to anti-authoritarianism, but Sherry's portrayal of these characteristics often raises the specter of oppression instead.

To counteract an immediate aversive response by liberal-progresssive scholars to a concept of "communitarian" jurisprudence, many scholars, including Sunstein and Michelman, have reframed republicanism to stand for strong participatory democracy, self-determination and dispersion of decisionmaking authority.\textsuperscript{342} The notion of law as self-constituted authority, as something other than a top-down command, is a break from authoritarianism, as is diffusion of authority. But a difficulty exists in a model featuring articulation of community values through virtue and dialogue.\textsuperscript{343} According to Sherry, accomplishing dialogue requires shared values and a shared discourse that in turn requires internalization of those values and discourses.\textsuperscript{344} Alisdair MacIntyre, who has sought to restore the virtues to human moral experience, has opined that the Aristotelean polis depended upon agreement on virtues.\textsuperscript{345} If "civic virtue" is essential to participation in political decisionmaking, and virtues must be agreed upon, the potential for authoritarian domination of those who are different increases. That is, the requirement of shared values will not prevent what Sherry has termed "aggressive majoritarianism" and may have the opposite effect. For those whose value discourses are different, communication may be impossible as well: They may seem incoherent, unintelligible or repulsive. Pluralism, which has been criticized by civic republicans, is a vision of a community of diversity—not the best, perhaps, but it is one that does not require obedience to shared values, discourses and experiences; it is one embodiment of tolerance that is crucial to the anti-authoritarian project.

Another problem arises from the civic republicans' arguments for dialogue. Individuals must have the ability to participate in the relevant discursive community. One immediate authoritarian problem is raised by the fact that the argument for "English only" laws has often been phrased in terms of the ability to participate in American politics, for example, when the real reason for enacting English only laws is nativist and xenophobic. But even without the xenophobic streak of "English only," for those whose experience, language, or both is not encompassed by the dominant discourse, participation in the dialogue will be difficult if not

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{341} Id. at 169. For a critique of Sherry's version of "tolerance" in the context of an argument that tolerance is a liberal value, see Smith, \textit{The Restoration of Tolerance}, 78 CALIF. L. REV. 305, 338-42 (1990).
\bibitem{343} See Sherry, supra note 31, at 552-55; Michelman, \textit{Law's Republic}, supra note 8, at 1526-32.
\bibitem{344} Sherry, supra note 31, at 555-56.
\bibitem{345} A. MACINTYRE, supra note 323, at 155.
\end{thebibliography}
impossible. Although Michelman's vision of legal practice rests on "bringing to legal-doctrinal presence the hitherto absent voices of emergently self-conscious social groups[,]"346 those voices must be able to communicate. While Michelman correctly suggests that the civil rights movement managed to "penetrate the dominant consciousness" and have some influence in altering the discourse of equal protection, the effectiveness of the civil rights struggle did not rest on language and discussion alone.347 Further, much of African-American experience and meaning is still, over thirty years later, outside the dominant frameworks of discourse and law.348 To be understood by the dominant discursive community might involve the translation of experience into terms the dominant discourse apprehends—for example, the translation into rights of the oppression of African-Americans during the 1950s and 1960s. Putting aside the risks of co-optation such translation may entail, translating from one discourse to another in order to participate in dialogue is not always possible or believed: consider the historical absence of women's and others' voices from dominant discourses such as law, legal scholarship, and philosophy and the frustration and feeling-craziness of those scholars brave enough to try to convey these meanings and experiences.349

To circumvent the very real authoritarian implications of civil republicanism, Sherry, Michelman and Sunstein all have had recourse to tolerance and rights. Blending community-based and individually-based concerns has promise: Michelman has argued that for a proper, non-authoritarian understanding of republicanism, one must promote citizenship for every member of the community by providing each member "admission to full and effective participation in the various arenas of public life."350 Participation in the dialogue must take place on conditions of freedom; changes in one's understanding as a result of dialogue must take place in circumstances "not . . . experienced as coercive, or invasive, or [as] a violation of one's identity or freedom."351 Laws chosen under these conditions would more likely be liberating than oppressing.

A single vision of what is good and right imposed in the name of the public good is both frightening and promising: It is frightening for the

346. Michelman, Law's Republic, supra note 8, at 1529.
348. See id. at 1349.
349. For a particularly powerful example of this, written with the author's voice counterpointed by doubt, see West, The Difference in Women's Hedonic Lives, 3 Wis. Women's L.J. 81 (1987); see also Coombe, Room for Maneuver: Toward a Theory of Practice in Critical Legal Studies, 14 Law & Soc. Inquiry 69, 100-08 (1989) (discussing symbolic practices and power).
351. Id. at 1527.
reasons already stated and promising because it rejects the libertarian Posner-like vision of completely privatizing the good and disabling the state from seeking to better people's lives. Currently, however, the difficulties presented by a tyranny of the majority or of the "general will" have not been addressed adequately by pure communitarians; the emphasis on community values can justify a great deal of repression and intolerance. Progressive participatory democracy, or "dialogic," scholars have had difficulty within their models when community values lead to banning books and punishing homosexuals without recourse to arguments based on notions of liberal principles and grounded on individual rights and dignity. Civic republican scholars, in recognizing this problem, have found that they have to modify, modernize, or meld the tradition with that of rights and principles to avoid the majoritarian difficulty.

C. Authoritarianism and the Court

Michelman and West have both identified authoritarian elements in the Court's current constitutional decisionmaking that are consistent with the description of formal authoritarianism, and both have demonstrated the formally authoritarian orientation of various scholars. For example, Michelman has argued that a "constitutional jurisprudence" based on "positivism" in the most reductionist sense is authoritarian in the formal sense. Michelman has observed that courts can be authoritarian by taking a stance of complete deference to "the prior normative utterance, express or implied, of extra-judicial authority". Although Michelman uses the notion of "popular authoritarianism" in his critique of Bruce Ackerman's argument that the Supreme Court may break with the past only when "the People" decide to make a break with past constitutional understandings, he does not note that Ackerman's process argument could require that courts obey the dictates of legally embodied popular majoritarian hatred, dislike or prejudice against a group. This link between formal and substantive authoritarianism in scholarship and decisionmaking is the subject of this section. By examining cases and the Court's reasoning therein, this section suggests that the Court is following an authoritarian path.

352. See, e.g., Minow, supra note 33; Michelman, Traces, supra note 206.
354. See Michelman, Law's Republic, supra note 8; West, Constitutionalism, supra note 3.
356. Id. at 1514 n.86.
357 Id. at 1496.
358. Id. at 1519-24.
The opinions of Justice White and Chief Justice Burger in *Bowers v. Hardwick* foreshadowed the rise in the Court's authoritarianism, not only in terms of results clearly lacking in empathy for human suffering, acknowledgment of human dignity and an indifference to punishment, but in terms of a tone and a form of reasoning that is substantively authoritarian. Justice Powell's opinion in *McCleskey v. Kemp* crystalized the Court's growing support for capital punishment and its indifference to racism in the United States by rejecting strong evidence that the Georgia capital sentencing structure discriminated against defendants on the basis of their victim's race, devalued African-American lives, and perpetuated government-approved racism. In its ruling in *McCleskey*, the Court stated that there was no "logical" reason to distinguish racism or sexism from other biases in sentencing, including capital sentencing, and further suggested that there actually wasn't any problem of racism in sentencing at all, despite the evidence presented. This indicates at best an attitude of indifference to racism. It appears that by the 1988-89 term, the Supreme Court had adopted the jurisprudence of *Bowers* and *McCleskey* taking not only a conservative turn but also a substantively authoritarian one. Rather than being conservative in the sense of caution and respect for tradition, much of the Court's language and many of its decisions provide evidence of a substantively authoritarian attitude on the part of many members of the Court. The Court has variously justified its decisions as deference to state authorities, obedience to legal commands and support of majoritarianism. The Court has also engaged in nativist, suspicious and stereotypical reasoning.

359. 478 U.S. 186 (1986). I omit discussion of Justice Powell's opinion, because his concurrence expressed concern with the punishment for homosexual sodomy. The Georgia statute made sodomy a felony punishable by up to twenty years in prison; quite obviously, there are other punitive results from a felony conviction, including loss of the right to vote.

360. See Henderson, Legality, supra note 33, at 1638-49 (discussing the opinions in *Bowers*).


363. Id. at 1409-10, 1416.

364. See West, *Constitutionalism*, supra note 3; Greenhouse, The Year the Court Turned to the Right, N.Y. Times, July 7, 1989, at A1, col. 2; see also Brubin, supra note 4 (arguing Reagan appointees are concerned with coercive application of state power to maintain social order; jurisprudence is one of statism and politics of management, not conservatism); cf. Chemerinsky, supra note 1, at 61 ("It is tempting to view the Rehnquist Court's decisions simply as a product of the conservative views of a majority of the current Justices [but] it view the Rehnquist Court entirely in ideological terms is to ignore" other forces shaping constitutional law.).

365. As Mark Tushnet has observed, "In its most admirable form, Burkean conservatism leads to a resigned acceptance of the change that it knows is inevitable. The Burkean will not battle to the death" Tushnet, A Note on the Revival of Textualism in Constitutional Theory, 58 S. CAL. L. REV 683, 694 (1985).

366. See infra notes 368-85 and accompanying text.

367. See Chemerinsky, supra note 1, at 46.
Prejudice and punitiveness are frequently subtextual, if not immediately obvious, in the Court's opinions. Along the way, the Court has enhanced the power of government to command, to punish, to control, and to ignore social wrongs. It has also diminished the power of individuals and governments—state and federal—to attempt to correct the evils of subordination and oppression.

Thus, in the 1988-89 term, the Court decided that the government could execute young people sixteen years of age\(^\text{368}\) and mentally retarded people.\(^\text{369}\) It held that the government owes no duty to protect children, its most vulnerable citizens, from "private violence."\(^\text{370}\) The Court also sharply curtailed the ability of governments and citizens to battle racial or gender discrimination. The Court struck down a minority business set-aside program meant to rectify past discrimination,\(^\text{371}\) and in other cases held that white males who were not parties to Title VII litigation could challenge affirmative action consent decrees,\(^\text{372}\) although women were barred from litigating the discriminatory result of a discriminatory contract through a narrow reading of the limitations period.\(^\text{373}\) The Court also held that section 1981 of the Civil Rights Act did not allow suits for racially discriminatory breaches of contract.\(^\text{374}\) A majority held that drug testing of customs employees without probable cause or even reasonable suspicion of drug use was constitutionally permissible.\(^\text{375}\) Further, the Court created limitations in federal habeas cases\(^\text{376}\) that became the grounds for the virtual end of federal habeas relief in 1990.\(^\text{377}\) The Court also came close to overruling Roe v. Wade in a decision that virtually ignored women's concerns.\(^\text{378}\)

The shift continued in the 1989-90 term.\(^\text{379}\) A majority of the Court rejected almost fifty years of constitutional doctrine in holding that the free
exercise clause did not protect Native American church members from legal disadvantages resulting from their sacramental use of peyote. Police may establish sobriety checkpoints, stopping and detaining motorists without probable cause. Police can enter premises without a warrant if they reasonably, although mistakenly, believe a person has the authority to consent to their entry and search; the government is not bound at all by the fourth amendment if it acts beyond the territorial boundaries of the United States. A bare majority did uphold the F.C.C.'s minority preference in granting broadcasting licenses and privileges against an equal protection challenge, but not without vigorous dissents. The Court also continued to approve almost every death penalty scheme it considered. At times, the Court has arguably reached substantively authoritarian results through formally authoritarian means. This seems evident in the Court's opinion in Patterson v McLean Credit Union, as well as in the decisions on federal habeas. In Patterson, Justice Kennedy took a formally authoritarian stance toward contract damages for racial discrimination and harassment under section 1981. Patterson had been set for reargument on whether the Court should overrule Runyon v. McCrary, a 1976 case that held that section 1981 permitted private damage actions for racially discriminatory breaches of contract. Faced with resounding evidence that Congress intended section 1981 to apply to private actions, the Court would have had great difficulty overruling Runyon. Unable to overrule the decision completely, Kennedy and the majority proceeded to redefine the elements of section 1981 suits to accomplish much the same result in contract actions.

Justice Kennedy's opinion speaks of deference to the doctrine of stare decisis, while it simultaneously eliminates most of the contract issues that can be litigated under section 1981. Justice Kennedy wrote:

[T]he right to make contracts does not extend, as a matter of either logic or semantics, to conduct by the employer after the contract relation has been established, including breach of the terms of the contract or imposition of discriminatory working conditions. Such postformation conduct does not involve the right to make a contract

Although it is standard contract doctrine that enforcing contracts means the right to performance or damages, for Kennedy, the enforcement

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388. Patterson, 109 S. Ct. at 2373 (emphasis added).
language of section 1981 applied only to "conduct by an employer which impairs an employee's ability to enforce through [the] legal process his or her established contract rights." The metaphysical moment of contract "formation," the moment that has given so many law students, law professors and courts headaches, becomes the only point at which discrimination is relevant. Harassment violating the terms and conditions of employment, freedom from which is arguably a term of the contract, was neither an issue of contract formation nor an impediment to using the legal process to enforce contract rights. "[R]acial harassment amounting to breach of contract, like racial harassment alone, impairs neither the right to make nor the right to enforce a contract." Allowing suits under section 1981 for breach of contract would "federalize all state-law claims for breach of contract where racial animus is alleged," which presumably raises a threat of chaos and loss of states' rights. Finally, to litigate discrimination at the formation stage under section 1981, individuals must prove discrimination according to the Title VII framework for burdens and standard of proof, thus, an effective legal remedy for individuals suffering from "private" racial discrimination has been sharply limited. Employers and other "private" actors not covered by Title VII (as well as those who are) who do not discriminate at the metaphysical formation stage are immune from suits alleging racist discrimination in the contractual relationship.

Another example of a formally authoritarian approach with substantively authoritarian overtones appears in the cases denying federal habeas relief to persons sentenced to death. In Teague, a plurality of the Court held that state defendants could not use federal habeas proceedings to attack their convictions if their claims were based on a "new rule" of constitutional criminal procedure. A majority of the Court in 1990, in Butler v. McKellar, interpreted the "new rule/new law" language of Teague to mean that "a decision announces a new rule 'if the result was not dictated by precedent:

Defendants may not rely on reasonable doctrinal development to avoid being barred from seeking habeas relief. Rather, the Court defined "rule" to mean specific, uninterpreted commands. A court's determination that its decision was within the logic of a prior decision or even "'controlled'" by a prior decision does not exempt such decisions from being "'new rules.' Differences among courts which are eventually resolved by the Supreme Court also produce new rules. Further, the majority

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390. Patterson, 109 S. Ct. at 2373.
391. Id. at 2376.
392. Teague, 109 S. Ct. at 1068.
394. Id. at 1216 (emphasis in original) (citation omitted) (quoting Teague, 109 S. Ct. at 1070).
395. Id. at 1217
opinion quoted approvingly from Teague's suggestion that habeas corpus serves only the punitive function of deterring state courts from committing constitutional violations; a new rule could not possibly deter the state courts, and therefore defendants cannot rely on such rules. An alternative interpretation of federal habeas corpus, that all individuals in the United States should enjoy the same constitutional rights and protections regardless of what state they live in, was ignored.

In what can be characterized as vindictive language, the Butler Court held that a death row inmate could not invoke either of Teague's exceptions to the new rule barrier. Police interrogation of an already-represented murder defendant, a violation of the fifth amendment according to precedent, was neither the kind of conduct beyond the lawmakers' authority to proscribe nor a procedure "'implicit in the concept of ordered liberty.'" The pure command notion, together with the punitive tone of the opinion, is startlingly authoritarian; as Joseph Hoffmann observed in the context of the earlier Teague decision, the result is that the state courts will be the primary interpreters of federal constitutional rights in criminal cases. Those who would argue for formal authoritariansm in the guise of obedience to absolute rules, because such formality produces better results than allowing judges to impose their own values and curbs wicked decisionmakers, could point to the flag-burning case, Texas v Johnson, as a victory for rule-boundedness. Unlike the sometimes-on, sometimes-off right to an abortion, which was created by an activist Court, the first amendment is a textual command that must be obeyed. Perhaps authoritarian obedience to command is the reason that a bare majority could hold that the Texas flag desecration statute was unconstitutional in Johnson. Justices Brennan, Marshall, Scalia and Kennedy filed an opinion that was consistent with existing first amendment precedent and that "'obeyed'" the command against restricting freedom of speech.

Apparently defending against the dissent's implied criticism that he was unpatriotic, however, Justice Kennedy wrote an agonized concurrence that more clearly illustrates an authoritarian obedience that curbed a substantively authoritarian, repressive urge. Only Kennedy's duty to obey "a pure command of the Constitution" could cause Kennedy to rule against the "lonely place of honor" the flag holds "in an age when absolutes are distrusted

396. Id.
397. I am indebted to Robert Weisberg for this characterization.
398. Butler, 110 S. Ct. at 1216.
399. Id. at 1218 (quoting Teague, 109 S. Ct. at 1064).
400. Hoffmann, supra note 376; see also Weisberg, A Great Writ While It Lasted, 81 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 9 (1990).
and simple truths are burdened by unneeded apologies." The concurrence hastens to sympathize with the dissenters, and he extols the flag as a symbol "constant in expressing beliefs Americans share, beliefs in law and peace and that freedom which sustains the human spirit." Perhaps, then, the case means only that authoritarian obedience to commands will have good results if the command is a good one. Further, although Kennedy saw a clear command to obey the Constitution's demand for a liberal result, four justices saw the command differently, thus undermining the assertion that obedience to "clear" commands constrains judges.

The Chief Justice's dissent stressed the meaning of the flag in militaristic and nationalistic terms, chronicling its use in wars and its value to the military. Rehnquist dismissively referred to the powerful communication of burning a flag as an "inarticulate grunt." Because it was only an inarticulate grunt, flag burning was tantamount to antagonizing others and was unprotected under the fighting words exception for freedom of speech. This analogy in itself is unremarkable, because there was reason to think that burning the flag would cause emotional distress to many. But the dissent didn't stop there. Rehnquist accused the majority of "anti-democratic" meddling and disparaged them for having engaged in a "regrettable patronizing civics lecture" instead of having upheld an important counter-majoritarian textual right. Invoking democracy and majoritarianism, Rehnquist asserted: "Surely one of the high purposes of a democratic society is to legislate against conduct that is regarded as evil and profoundly offensive to the majority of people—whether it be murder, embezzlement, pollution, or flag burning." Declaring that flag burning is tantamount to the human harms brought about by murder, theft or toxic chemicals seems unjustifiable; it does not entail a physical intrusion or tangible loss. Although some may experience psychological pain, the psychological pain caused by flag burning certainly cannot be greater than the pain caused by racist hate speech and pornography, which currently enjoy first amendment protection. Further, if the state has no duty to prevent severe physical harms according to the Court's opinion in DeShaney, it is odd that it has a duty to protect

402. Id. at 2548 (Kennedy, J., concurring).
403. Id.
404. See infra note 487; see also The Authoritarian Personality, supra note 78, at 373.
406. Id. at 2553-54. The decision in Johnson met with angry calls from the President and Congress for a constitutional amendment prohibiting the burning of flags and to the passage of a federal statute prohibiting flag burning. See also Michelman, Saving Old Glory: On Constitutional Iconography, 42 STAN. L. REV 1337 (1990). This, together with an accompanying outburst of patriotic fervor, indicates a growing recourse to authoritarianism in the United States.
408. Id.
people from seeing an important symbol destroyed. Having declared in *Webster* 410 that the Court decides what the Constitution requires, Rehnquist wrote in *Johnson*: "Our Constitution wisely places limits on powers of legislative majorities to act, but the declaration of such limits by this Court 'is, at all times, a question of much delicacy, which ought seldom, if ever, to be decided in the affirmative, in a doubtful case.'" 411 The inconsistency in these cases indicates that Rehnquist may be untroubled by manipulating principles to serve ends.

An examination of the Court's reasoning and language in specific cases reinforces the argument that the Court recently has taken a more direct substantively authoritarian approach to constitutional cases. Racism, nationalism and indifference to oppression characterize these opinions. Affirmative action, originally meant to assure substantive equality for members of groups that have been victims of stereotypy and subordination, has been controversial in a society dedicated to individualism and an "equal opportunity mythology," 412 but it was also anathema to authoritarian prejudice. Absent stereotypy, misogyny and racism, it is difficult to believe that the phrase could have been transformed from a positive meaning to a code word for "less qualified," "reverse racism," "quotas," and worse. A majority of the Supreme Court now appears to have adopted the negative view, however. In *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.* 413 a majority of the Justices struck down a mandatory local government set-aside program for minority-owned construction businesses as a violation of the equal protection clause. Such plans deny equal protection to whites and discriminate against whites. The opinions make clear that state and local governments are now violating equal protection if they have minority set-aside plans aimed at remedying past discrimination, absent a fairly demanding standard of proof of causation: they must admit that they themselves intentionally discriminated or aided in discrimination. State and congressional power to pass remedial legislation under section five of the fourteenth amendment also seems dubious. 414

In the *Croson* case, Justice O'Connor, writing for a plurality, used a formally authoritarian mode in stating that granting victims of societal discrimination preference "would be contrary to both the letter and spirit of a constitutional provision whose central command is equality;" her equality is a formal, neutral equality rather than a richer, more substantive equality. Absent a showing of intentional discrimination, no race-conscious affirmative action is constitutional. O'Connor found no difference in cultural meaning between African-American and white, stating that all "[c]lassifications based on race carry a danger of stigmatic harm." Try as one might, it is difficult to see that whites are disadvantaged or stigmatized by their race in the United States, or even in Richmond, Virginia, nor does Justice O'Connor's opinion cite any evidence to support this particular interpretation. With almost willful blindness, O'Connor wrote that "[a]bsent searching judicial inquiry there is simply no way of determining what [racial] classifications are 'benign' or 'remedial' and what classifications are in fact motivated by illegitimate notions of racial inferiority or simple racial politics;" accordingly, all racial classifications, for whatever purpose, are suspect. Further, her opinion emphasizes the African-American "dominance" of the Richmond city council and implies that whites might be a *disadvantaged* minority in Richmond. The racist overtones of the opinion are hard to overlook, as is the substantively authoritarian agenda of a majority of the Justices. Rhetorically, Justice O'Connor's opinion also contains a substantively authoritarian tone of hostility: pejorative language and sarcasm appear in her dismissal of the city's efforts to remedy the effects of past discrimination in the construction industry. The affirmative action medical school admissions plan in *Regents of the University of California v Bakke* was a "racially segregated" one, even though what it sought was integration. The city's assertion of discrimination against minorities was "sheer speculation." The Richmond program defined "Minority Business Enterprise" to include Latino, Asian, Native American, Eskimo and Aleut businesses; O'Connor wrote somewhat sarcastically:

> The random inclusion of racial groups that, as a practical matter, may never have suffered from discrimination in Richmond, suggests that perhaps the city's purpose was not in fact to remedy past discrimination. If a 30% set aside was "narrowly tailored" to compensate black contractors for past discrimination, one may legitimately ask why they

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416. *Id.* at 721; see Crenshaw, *supra* note 347, at 1373-86; Lawrence, *supra* note 34 (on the meaning of being African-American in the United States).
are forced to share this “remedial relief” with an Aleut citizen who moves to Richmond tomorrow? ⁴²⁰

Much as Justice Powell had done in rejecting the claim of discrimination in McCleskey, O’Connor employed the argument of social chaos as a trope against affirmative action to ameliorate societal discrimination, unsympathetically dismissing the possible claims of those so oppressed. O’Connor wrote that “[t]o accept Richmond’s claim that past societal discrimination alone can serve as the basis for rigid racial preferences would be to open the door to competing claims for ‘remedial relief’ for every disadvantaged group.” ⁴²¹ As Patricia Williams commented, this argument “sets up a ‘slippery slope’ at the bottom of which lie hordes-in-waiting of warring barbarians . . . It problematizes by conjuring mythic dangers.” ⁴²² As Williams noted in her criticism of the Richmond decision:

What strikes me most about this holding are the rhetorical devices the court employs to justify its outcome: societal discrimination is “too amorphous”; racial goals are labelled “unyielding”; goals are labelled “quotas”; testimony becomes mere “recitation”; legislative purpose and action become “simple legislative assurances of good intention”; lower court opinion is disregarded as just “blind judicial deference”; and statistics are rendered “generalizations.” ⁴²³

In 1990, Chief Justice Rehnquist wrote an opinion with strong nationalist and militaristic overtones. In United States v. Verdugo-Urquidez, ⁴²⁴ Rehnquist invoked the plain meaning of the text of the Constitution, the intent of the framers, and militaristic justifications to hold that the fourth amendment did not bind the United States government in searching and seizing the property of foreign nationals in their own countries. Even those foreign nationals arrested and brought to the United States and imprisoned by this country have no grounds to invoke our Constitution or its procedural protections. The words “the people” in the fourth amendment referred only to “the People of the United States.” ⁴²⁵ According to Rehnquist, the intent of the framers “never suggested that the provision was intended to restrain the actions of the Federal Government against aliens outside of the United States territory.” ⁴²⁶ Brushing aside the cases which hold that the equal protection clause applies to aliens, Rehnquist wrote that such protections only applied to aliens with “substantial connections” to the United States,

⁴²⁰. Id. at 728.
⁴²¹. Id. at 727.
⁴²³. Id. at 2129 (footnotes omitted).
⁴²⁵. Id. at 1060-61.
⁴²⁶. Id. at 1061.
not to foreign nationals in their own countries.\textsuperscript{427} Relying on cases decided before the Court’s development of constitutional procedural protections and even before the incorporation of the Bill of Rights, Rehnquist asserted that “not every constitutional provision applies to governmental activity even where the United States has sovereign power.”\textsuperscript{428} Honoring the Rule of Law for foreign nationals would cripple national security, national interests, and the option of resorting to armed force. Once again, the notion of hordes waiting to litigate claims became a justification for dismissing the petitioner’s claim that the government had to follow its own Constitution.\textsuperscript{429} As Justices Brennan and Marshall pointed out in dissent, “we cannot forget that the behavior of our law enforcement agents abroad sends a powerful message about the Rule of Law to individuals everywhere. . . . If we seek respect for law and order, we must observe these principles ourselves.”\textsuperscript{430} A militaristic, authoritarian government will ignore the rules and use its power as it sees fit;\textsuperscript{431} the majority opinion approves of the use of such power.

Members of the Court have engaged in various strategies to arrive at arguably substantively authoritarian results, as in the death penalty cases, while abandoning the same strategies when they fail to support the Justice’s predilections or prejudices. Two opinions by Justice Scalia provide an example of this willingness to use strategies selectively. In his opinion upholding the constitutionality of the death penalty for minors aged sixteen or older in \textit{Stanford v Kentucky},\textsuperscript{432} Justice Scalia asserted that state legislatures provided the best evidence of contemporary values regarding execution of juvenile offenders.\textsuperscript{433} Because a “majority of the States that permit capital punishment authorize it for crimes committed at age 16 or above,”\textsuperscript{434} the execution of minors who committed their offenses at the age of sixteen or seventeen was constitutionally permissible. But in \textit{Michael H. v Gerald D.},\textsuperscript{435} a due process challenge by a biological father to a California statute allowing only the husband or wife to challenge the presumption of biological parentage of children born during a marriage, Justice Scalia wrote:

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\text{[I]t is ultimately irrelevant, even for purposes of determining current social attitudes towards the alleged substantive right Michael asserts, that the present law in a number of States appears to allow the natural father the theoretical power to rebut the marital presumption.}
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What counts is whether the States in fact award substantive parental rights to the natural father of a child.

In *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, although the Court did not abolish the right to abortion, the majority opinions indicated little sympathy or concern for women. The majority opinion by Chief Justice Rehnquist relied on the Court’s decision in the *DeShaney* case for the proposition that there is no "affirmative right to governmental aid" in reaching a holding that a state prohibition on the use of public hospitals by public employees for performing abortions simply "leaves a pregnant woman with the same choices as if the State had chosen not to operate any public hospitals at all." Rejecting the trimester divisions of *Roe*, Rehnquist, writing for four justices, stated that there was no reason "why the State’s interest in protecting potential human life should come into existence only at the point of viability." Rehnquist heavily implied that the state’s interest in "protecting potential human life [exists] throughout pregnancy." His opinion makes the textualist argument that nothing in the Constitution’s text could supply a principled basis for the trimester division. But while ostensibly obeying the command of the text, Rehnquist declared that there was no reason to obey precedent; the Court itself is the only entity that can determine the meaning of the Constitution, it alone determines the command of the Constitution. The doctrine of stare decisis "has less power in constitutional cases, where, save for constitutional amendments, this Court is the only body able to make needed changes." And, although only the Court could decide constitutional issues, Rehnquist appealed to democracy and the legislative process as justifications for deferring to the command of the Missouri legislature in *Webster*. He noted that "[t]he goal of constitutional adjudication is to hold true the balance between that which the Constitution puts beyond the reach of the democratic process and that which it does not. We think we have done that today."
Striking the balance between what the Constitution places beyond the political process and what it leaves to the political process is defensible in the case of abortion, because there is no explicit textual reference to privacy or to equal protection for women. But the Court has not stopped there. In a 1990 opinion by Justice Scalia, the Court suggested that the government could control even rights enumerated in the Bill of Rights. In Employment Division, Department of Human Resources v Smith, the Court held that the free exercise clause of the first amendment did not protect sacramental use of peyote by members of the Native American Church from state regulation. In an opinion that quoted Frankfurter’s opinion in Minersville School District v Gobitis—a case that had been overruled by the Court—and that distinguished every free exercise decision upholding the right to practice religion against state interference, Justice Scalia also suggested that nothing in the Constitution protects basic rights and freedoms from government control. As long as the state does not "intentionally" discriminate against a religious group, it can forbid members of the faith to practice their sacraments and beliefs by majority vote for any arguably rational reason. Scalia wrote: "Values that are protected against government interference through enshrinement in the Bill of Rights are not thereby banished from the political process."

Scalia refers to the threat of social chaos or anarchy in vaguely disguised form several times in his opinion; fear of social chaos and emphasis on order and control are hallmarks of substantive authoritarianism. At one point, he quoted Reynolds v United States, the Mormon polygamy case, to argue that citizens must not be a law unto themselves and again raised the spectre of anarchistic law-unto-themselves later in the opinion in order to justify denying any special privilege for the free exercise of religion. Perhaps even more chilling is Scalia’s dismissal of the value in free exercise, which Justice O’Connor’s concurrence noted was “our Nation’s fundamental commitment to individual religious liberty,” especially for those who are discriminated against or are victims of prejudice. According to Scalia and four other Justices:

[T]o say that a nondiscriminatory religious-practice exemption is permitted, or even that it is desirable, is not to say that it is constitutionally

449. 310 U.S. 586 (1940) (flag salute case overruled by West Virginia Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943)).
450. See Smith, 110 S. Ct. at 1602-06.
451. Id.
452. Id. at 1606.
453. 98 U.S. 145 (1879).
454. Smith, 110 S. Ct. at 1600.
455. Id. at 1603, 1606.
456. Id. at 1606 (O’Connor, J., concurring).
required, and that the appropriate occasions for its creation can be
discerned by the courts. It may fairly be said that leaving accommodation
to the political process will place at a relative disadvantage those religious
practices that are not widely engaged in; but that unavoidable conse-
quence of democratic government must be preferred to a system in
which each conscience is a law unto itself or in which judges weigh the
social importance of all laws against the centrality of all religious
beliefs.47

Native Americans, historically the targets of discrimination, not to mention
near genocide, are likely to suffer further discrimination because of their
religious beliefs, or at a minimum, "a relative disadvantage" in the "political
process."

The retirement of Justice Brennan, whose presence on the Court accounted
for the majorities in the flag-burning and F.C.C. minority-preference cases,458
leaves no reason to believe that the Court will change its authoritarian
direction in the near future, and much reason to worry about the authori-
tarian jurisprudence that has justified this direction. Given the general
cultural assumption that citizens are to obey the Court's pronouncements,
and the reality that the Court's judgments influence legal understanding,
the current direction is troubling for liberal/progressive and anti-authori-
tarian hopes. Although, at this point, the efforts of liberal/progressive
scholars might be better directed toward the legislative and executive branches,
courts will still be playing a role in shaping law and the language of legal
rhetoric. Ceding the control of legal discourse in the courts to the current
majority of the Supreme Court would be a mistake; at a minimum, an
alternative discourse must always be available. Further, while the immediate
future appears bleak, change can and does occur, and a developed anti-
authoritarian approach should be available when there is a change. In order
to avoid giving up on the courts, liberal/progressives must understand what
the anti-authoritarian stance is and use it to the best of their ability in
framing constitutional theory and practice, both before courts and in
legislatures.

III. AGAINST LEGAL AUTHORITARIANISM

To combat authoritarianism in law, we need to develop a different
understanding of law and authority. It may be useful to this end to
understand which attitudes and beliefs appear to have anti-authoritarian

457. Id. (emphasis added).
458. Brennan wrote the majority opinions in Eichman and Johnson, the two flag desecration
cases, and in Metro Broadcasting, the case upholding minority preferences for new broadcasting
licenses. United States v. Eichman, 110 S. Ct. 2404 (1990); Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. F.C.C.,
tendencies. This section briefly discusses approaches that seem to be useful in restraining the impulse toward authoritarianism. Drawing on studies by social scientists, the section then suggests that particular legal theories would support a non-authoritarian vision of the Rule of Law. Studies by social scientists and psychological theorists suggest that certain orientations to authority enable people to resist and combat authoritarianism. Although the anti-authoritarian attitude can rest on several different grounds, and holding the attitude does not always lead to goodness or altruism just as holding an authoritarian attitude does not preclude some goodness or altruistic acts, the attitude does resist oppression and domination of others. Such an attitude toward law, emerging in some feminist, critical race and humanist jurisprudence, and never absent entirely from a jurisprudence resting on a strong belief in human rights, may hold the most promise for combating authoritarianism in legal thinking.

In *The Authoritarian Personality* study, the authors indicated that non-authoritarians were low on ethnocentricity and high on tolerance of difference. Although acknowledging that it was more difficult to generalize from the data about the anti-authoritarian personality, the authors divided individuals with low scores on authoritarianism into various “syndromes” that they then evaluated in psychoanalytic terms. Two of the “syndromes” — the “Easy-Going Low Scorer” and the “Genuine Liberal” — are of particular interest. Together with the “protesting,” or reactive, low scorer, the “easy-going” low scorer accounted for the most frequent type of low scorer. The authors described the easy-going person as non-violent, compassionate, imaginative and non-judgmental. Far from being patriarchal or sexist, easy-going people “may best be characterized as those who know no fear of women.” The authors criticize the easy-going person as too passive to be likely to resist oppression, although “one may count on them as on persons who, under no circumstances, ever will adjust themselves to political or psychological fascism.” The “genuine liberal,” like the easy-going person, is “compassionate,” but the authors concluded that she is more likely to take action against oppression. From the somewhat sketchy description of the genuine liberal given by the authors (and from references in a later study to the Kantian morality preferred by the authors of *The

460. *Id.* at 191-208.
461. *Id.* at 380-85.
462. *Id.* at 373. The authors emphasized that “low scorers are as a whole less ‘typed’ than high scorers,” however. *Id.*
463. *Id.* at 380-81.
464. *Id.* at 381.
465. *Id.*
466. *Id.* at 383.
Authoritarian Personality), it appears that the "genuine liberal" personality is a rights-focused one. The authors seem to have found anti-authoritarian tendencies in people who resembled either Kohlberg's rights-based higher stages of moral development or Gilligan's higher stages of an ethic of care and morality of non-violence.

In The Altruistic Personality, a study of individuals who helped Jewish people during the Nazi reign of terror in Europe, two researchers found that rescuers differed from nonrescuers in several important respects. First, they reported different upbringing: The parents of rescuers tended to emphasize the values of care—the need to be helpful, hospitable, concerned, and loving—and were "significantly less likely to emphasize obedience" or to use physical force in disciplining their children. The parents of rescuers taught them that "[c]are was not a spectator sport, it compelled action. It meant assuming personal responsibility . . . " Thus, the rescuers were more likely to have been raised in non-authoritarian homes and less likely to have developed either a fear of or an absolute identity with authority. Second, although rescuers and nonrescuers did not significantly differ overall in their ability to empathize with others, at least in terms of emotional contagion (taking on the mood or emotion of another), rescuers were more responsive to others' pain, sadness and helplessness. Third, the rescuers resembled the anti-authoritarian "genuine liberal" in several ways. They tended to have had parents who rarely used physical punishment to discipline their children and who were approving of their children, a factor that seems to correlate with low ethnocentrism and high democratic potential. The rescuers, "like Adorno's antifascists, were more characterized by close relationships with others, empathy for and identification with the underdog, and perceptions of others as individuals rather than as representatives of a [stereo]type . . . . " Finally, the authors of The Altruistic Personality found a difference as well; The Authoritarian Personality depended too much upon identifying the "true" anti-authoritarian as an independent, ego-integrated individual who embodied a Kantian vision of the moral development at the expense of other forms of moral development.

468. See Blum, supra note 34.
469. C. Gilligan, supra note 324; see also Gilligan & Attanucci, Two Moral Orientations, in Mapping the Moral Domain 73 (1988).
470. S. Olner & P. Olner, supra note 38.
471. Id. at 164.
472. Id. at 162.
473. Id. at 179-80, 249.
474. Id. at 168.
475. Id. at 174.
476. See The Authoritarian Personality, supra note 78 (containing a description of the "genuine liberal").
477. S. Olner & P. Olner, supra note 38, at 256.
478. Id.
such as Carol Gilligan’s ethic of care.\textsuperscript{479} Rescuers fell in both categories, but many followed the ethic of care. Thus, the fear of Adorno and his co-authors—that those whom they termed the “easy-goer” would not take action against fascism—seems to have been misplaced.

The characteristics of rescuers, by and large, were inconsistent both with the economic model of rational self-interested behavior and with the argument that human beings “need” authority in order to curb their violent tendencies. The authors identified four rough categories of rescuers, depending on their reported reason for helping Jews, although care for others was a common thread among the groups. In one group, this care appeared to stem from exposure to parental values “emphasiz[ing] caring for others, dependability, and independence.”\textsuperscript{480} Caring more concretely influenced another group of rescuers, who acted because of their friendship and contact with Jewish people.\textsuperscript{481} A third group felt personal responsibility for society as a whole and felt connected to, and responsible for, everyone in their society.\textsuperscript{482} A fourth group was “egalitarian,” feeling a general similarity with all people; “[w]hat moved them most was others’ pain, and they felt a strong responsibility to relieve it.”\textsuperscript{483} But, “rescuers [were] not saints.”\textsuperscript{484} They had difficulties with and resentments of some of the individuals they rescued; nonetheless, they persisted. Overall, “[w]hat distinguished rescuers was not their lack of concern with self, external approval, or achievement, but rather their capacity for extensive relationships—their stronger sense of attachment to others and their feeling of responsibility for the welfare of others, \textit{including those outside their immediate familial or communal circles.”}\textsuperscript{485}

Although “[i]nvolve[ment], commitment, care, and responsibility” characterized those willing to defy authority and sheer force in order to take affirmative actions to help Jews, the “catalysts” for altruistic action varied. The authors found that individuals gave three general reasons for helping: many individuals acted from an empathic response to their direct or indirect knowledge of the pain inflicted upon Jewish people;\textsuperscript{486} others responded to, or obeyed, the normative demand of “a highly valued social group” such as these relatively few churches that opposed the Nazi efforts to exterminate the Jews;\textsuperscript{487} and others saw outside events as violating their principles of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{479} Id. at 257-58.
  \item \textsuperscript{480} Id. at 184.
  \item \textsuperscript{481} Id.
  \item \textsuperscript{482} Id. at 185.
  \item \textsuperscript{483} Id.
  \item \textsuperscript{484} Id. at 239.
  \item \textsuperscript{485} Id. at 249 (emphasis added).
  \item \textsuperscript{486} Id. at 185.
  \item \textsuperscript{487} Id. at 199-203.
\end{itemize}
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justice or of care and acted out of principle. Only in the instance of the "normocentric" rescuers, those who obeyed the commands of authorities to help Jewish people, does an authoritarian orientation perhaps occur, lending support to the argument made in this Article that it is the goodness of the authority, rather than obedience per se, that determines good outcomes. Abstract principles, empathy, or following the normative rules of an authoritative group did not, of course, guarantee virtue, but empathy and principles of care or fairness were common and inspired acts of moral courage in the group studied.

In another study, two researchers used surveys of Americans to explore why people do horrible things to others at the behest of authority, and why others might approve those actions. This sociological study was particularly concerned with obedience to "legitimate" political authority that led to "crimes of obedience," or the commission of hurtful or atrocious acts in the name of superior orders or authorities. "Crimes of obedience," defined as the commission of acts that are illegal or that the person should have known were illegal while obeying "superior orders," entail individual moral responsibility as well as authoritarian punitiveness and rigidity. To determine whether orientation to authority affected perceptions of individual moral responsibility, the researchers conducted surveys on attitudes about the conviction of Lieutenant Calley in the My Lai massacre case together with measures of attitudes about authority, obedience, and attitudes about particular hypothetical and real cases. While the authors recognized that the responses from individuals about what they would do in similar circumstances does not prove what they actually would do if they were in the situation of being ordered to obey immoral or illegal commands, their study confirmed the relation of authoritarian submissiveness and identification with authority to a willingness to approve authoritarian oppression.

The authors were unable to develop a statistically significant measure for the anti-authoritarian orientation, which they termed "value orientation," but the group they identified as value oriented did test low on measures of authoritarianism, traditional moralism and conservatism. Because both

488. Id. at 188, 209.
490. Id. at 46-51.
491. Id. at 262; see also S. Milgram, supra note 71.
492. H. Kelman & V. Hamilton, supra note 74, at 304. Part of the difficulty may have come from the questions used to measure "value orientation." The authors observed that the scale used to measure the value set contained many items that most people in American culture would agree with no matter what their ultimate orientation to authority. Id. at 304-05. The "value oriented" individual descriptively and empirically appears to be upper-middle-class in education and status; rather than subscribe to the hypothesis of "working class authoritarianism," the authors note that upper classes would experience more personal efficacy and ability to resist authority. Id. at 316.
the traditional moralism and the conservatism scales correlated with the measure of authoritarianism developed by Adorno and his co-authors, one might tentatively conclude that the non-authoritarians in the crimes of obedience study would meet the characteristics described as anti-authoritarian by the Adorno study. Descriptively, the non-authoritarian individuals were likely to assert individual responsibility for crimes of obedience and to measure authority's commands by their personal moral standards. They supported the government, but the support was conditioned on whether the government upheld the values and principles for which they understood it to stand. Overall, the study concluded that

[v]alue orientation was related to a tendency to assert individual responsibility for crimes of obedience and to a disposition to disobey commands that violate the individual's own principles. In contrast, the rule and role scales were both associated with a tendency to deny individual responsibility and a disposition to obey authoritative orders.

The anti-authoritarian orientation can be care-based or rights-based, but in either instance, it grows out of a sense of personal moral responsibility, sympathy towards, and recognition of, the individual dignity and humanity of others. The orientation includes a sense of responsibility for others, an ethic of care, a capacity for compassion and empathy—particularly for the pain of others—together with a sense of independence from conventional morality. Tolerance of difference and of ambiguity also characterizes the anti-authoritarian attitude, but this by no means entails passive inaction. Rather, such tolerance is a refusal to engage in stereotypy and categorization of persons, a resistance to us/them thinking, and an ability to place commonality rather than difference at the base of relationship to others. Just as authoritarians are capable of good, anti-authoritarians are capable of evil, but their tendency toward inclusion, relationship and care for others mitigates the tendency to exclusion, punishment and oppression of those who are different.

Individual moral responsibility, respect and care for others, empathy for the pain of others, tolerance for diversity, concern for the rights of individuals—each of these elements seems robustly related to anti-authoritarianism. These elements are not foreign to legal thought. Thus it is important to consider, briefly, what ways of thinking about law can help us in opposing authoritarian oppression and subordination, and how we might think of law as something other than a formal and substantive instrument of authoritarianism. There are a number of scholarly legal arguments available that embody these anti-authoritarian traits. For example, Cover's work

493. Id. at 305.
494. Id. at 269.
495. Id. at 305.
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consistently emphasized the personal, individual moral responsibility of judges in interpreting and applying the law. West's work frequently emphasizes personal moral responsibility and moral choice. Moreover, the arguments of humanist and progressive liberal scholars for positive and negative rights generally fit a description of the anti-authoritarian. The works of the "perfectionists" whom Monaghan criticized are anti-authoritarian in their arguments for the constitutional embodiment of those "substantive goods" of individual dignity, freedom, universal justice, and benevolence.

Karst's work, exemplified in his book Belonging to America, rejects the notion of the Constitution as fixed command and argues for expansive and inclusionary interpretation, particularly of the fourteenth amendment. Observing that part of the character and history of the United States is nativist, racist, sexist and intolerant—in short, authoritarian—Karst also points to the elements of tolerance, understanding and inclusion in that character and history. Against intolerance, subordination and exclusion of the different, he argues for the use of our competing traditions of tolerance, responsiveness and inclusion in interpreting and applying the Constitution. For example, criticizing the Court's turn to "discriminatory intent" as the necessary element of equal protection violations as an effort "to contain" the promise of the clause, Karst argues for empathic and responsive constitutional adjudication consistent with anti-authoritarian principles.

In reaction to the Court's authoritarian decision in Bowers v Hardwick, Michelman has argued for an understanding of strong personal rights, grounded in respect for individuals, as necessary to full participation and consideration in the formulation of non-authoritarian law. According to Michelman, society can enforce its norms through law in a non-authoritarian manner only when "law-rule" is the same as "self-rule." And "self-rule" is possible only in a process that is non-authoritarian itself.

Neither Karst nor Michelman, nor indeed most liberal humanist scholars, is outside the range of "normal" discourse about law or legal understanding. Their arguments are always already available to those seeking to combat

496. West, Authority, supra note 180; West, Freedom, supra note 379.
497. See supra notes 218-21 and accompanying text.
499. K. KARST, supra note 33.
502. Id. at 1499-1503.
503. Id. at 1499-1501. He states that "self-given law" can only be created through a process "not considered or experienced as coercive, or invasive, or otherwise an invasion of one's identity and freedom." Id. at 1526-27.
authoritarian uses of law. The arguments of other legal scholars against the relationship of law to authoritarian oppression, however, differ in their emphasis on awareness of pain and suffering and their requirement of a caring response. These other developing lines of scholarship are even more markedly embodiments of anti-authoritarianism, in that they emphasize responsiveness and opposition to oppression and inclusion of diverse views and visions in law. These lines of scholarship argue for the use of an anti-subordination principle to combat the public and private oppression of groups and individuals in society, for the hearing and taking account of the voices of the oppressed in legal decisions and for the use of response to human suffering and pain in legal decisionmaking. Ruth Colker, for example, has argued that equal protection doctrine should center on an anti-subordination principle that identifies and remedies the evils of "racial patriarchy" in the United States. The evils the anti-subordination principle combats are the evils of authoritarianism: the dominance and oppression of some by others and the denial of full human status to some human beings by others. In deciding equal protection issues under the anti-subordination principle, the effect of a practice on the subordinated is always relevant. West has urged a reawakened personal sense of moral responsibility for our actions as a way to make rights and freedoms meaningful against oppressive, illiberal power.

The scholarship of many minority and feminist scholars urges consideration of the voices of the oppressed in transforming law. By demonstrating how the voices of the oppressed and the "different" have not been heard in legal decisionmaking, and by demonstrating the oppressive effects of that exclusion, they suggest how legal doctrine and rules might be used to liberate, rather than subordinate, human beings. By communicating the experience of subordination, oppression and difference, these scholars also appeal to our common humanity. For example, Mari Matsuda has argued from the experience of Japanese Americans to show that reparations to those interned by a racist government during World War II are not problematic under law, but consistent with it. Patricia Williams has argued against inflexibility and absolutes in eloquently appealing to a celebrating and nurturing of difference. Charles Lawrence and Matsuda have challenged the legal mind to address the harm of racist hate speech, using both accounts of the effects of racist hate speech and legal doctrine.

505. West, Freedom, supra note 379, at 79-106.
506. Matsuda, Reparations, supra note 34.
507 Williams, supra note 422, at 2143.
508. Matsuda, Racist Speech, supra note 34; Lawrence, If He Hollers Let Him Go: Regulating Racist Speech on Campus, 1990 DUKE L.J. 431.
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Littleton and Martha Mahoney have used stories and the law to depict the situation of battered women and to suggest legal reform. Robin West has argued that Congress' power under section five of the fourteenth amendment could be used to abolish the marital rape exemption in rape laws. Martha Minow has argued that judges should be aware of their own assumptions and biases so that they may be open to considering the message of those who are different. Each of these and other scholars have messages that challenge substantively authoritarian assumptions in the law of the United States.

Scholars concerned that legal decisionmakers invoke a caring response believe that the stories of those who are victims of authoritarian law can increase understanding of their victimization or even bring about change in law. These scholars agree that law is indeterminate in the sense that law is always open to different interpretations, different resolutions and different futures, and that legal doctrine can respond to caring for the pain of others. As Karst and I have argued, efforts to convey the pain caused by particular laws or legal practices are important to morally good legal decisionmaking. And morally good decisions require empathizing with those historically and presently seen as Other and accordingly oppressed. Empathy for the pain of others can be an essential element of resistance to the persecution of others in an authoritarian system, as The Altruistic Personality study suggests. As West has argued, knowing the pain of others is possible and important for responsive, caring and, accordingly, anti-authoritarian law: "The knowledge we learn this way—knowledge of the subjectivity of others, gained and pursued through metaphor, allegory, narrative, literature, and culture—is a peculiar sort of knowledge, but it is absolutely essential to any meaningful quest for justice, legal or otherwise." Such empathy and understanding alert the moral sensors of the responsible decisionmaker, who in turn may take action to end authoritarian oppression.

CONCLUSION

This Article has argued that there is much in law and legal thinking that is conducive to authoritarianism, and that particular arguments about law
reinforce authoritarian applications of law. Authoritarian understandings of law and legal decisionmaking rely on the paradigms of rule-following, obedience to authority narrowly understood and suspicion of human nature. While the present United States Supreme Court (and perhaps many federal courts) appears to be taking both a formally and substantively authoritarian approach to constitutional decisionmaking, it should not be permitted to define the universe of legal discourse and constitutional understanding for other courts or legislatures. Nor should scholars and lawyers give up on articulating humanitarian visions of law and the Constitution. The anti-authoritarian, humanitarian vision of law and the Constitution is available, and the vision of broader, more responsive, and liberating uses of law should be the concern of all legal thinkers. Substantive authoritarianism flourishes when we cease to take personal responsibility for the suffering and oppression of others in the name of obedience to authority, including legal authority. It is incumbent upon us to take responsibility:

Nothing in law is so fixed that we don't have responsibility for acting creatively in making things just. When we go to sleep at night, we must reflect that we have done something political that very day: that in a society of powerful and powerless, our decisions and non-decisions have sided with one or the other.517

516. For an argument that progressives should turn to Congress, see West, Constitutionalism, supra note 3, at 713-21.