

Psychologized Citizenship:
An Arendtian Reading

by

David Joseph Thompson
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“Dictatorship and freedom—predestination and free will,” Frazier continued. “What are these but pseudoquestions of linguistic origin? When we ask what Man can make of Man, we don't mean the same thing by ‘Man’ in both instances. We mean to ask what a few men can make of mankind. And that's the all-absorbing question of the twentieth century. What kind of world can we build—those of us who understand the science of behavior?”

...

In some strange way Frazier had undercut all the standard issues in political science, and they seemed scarcely worth debating.

—B. F. Skinner, *Walden Two*

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The twentieth century rise of psychological disciplines to legitimacy and prominence fundamentally changed Americans' self-perception, the vocabulary of their emotional lives, and the way they understood health. It also changed American politics. These changes have been less obvious, but no less fundamental, than the other changes in American lives brought about by the development of the psychological disciplines. Here I trace what I believe to be a major political consequence of the popularity of modern psychology, psychoanalysis, psychiatry, and psychotherapy: the production of an inactive, "psychologized" mode of citizenship. An examination of a piece of the American political imagination, this thesis is situated at the intersection of political theory, American politics, and psychology.

In 1890, American psychologist William James reflected on his discipline's struggle for influence: "It always gives us a little shock to find this mass of human beings not only living and ignoring us and all our gods, but actually reading and writing and cogitating without ever a thought of our canons, standards, and authorities" (362). James' words illuminate a vast gulf—on one side, American psychology's relatively small cultural purchase before the turn of the century, on the other, the massive cultural influence it wields today. The idea that the human mind can be studied with the same methods applied to nature, as well as the idea that "mental health" can be defined, maintained, and improved with the help of that study, have only recently become accepted truths. While established medicine in America now considers mental health to be an important component of general well-being, in

the late nineteenth century it tended to treat the kind of “talk therapy” now used to address mental illness as quackery, the exclusive purview of illegitimate “mind healers” (Caplan 1998, 69-78, 117-146). The findings of experimental psychologists are widely respected today, too, but their field had to pass through decades of similar skepticism in its quest for scientific respectability.

The changes wrought by the ascendance of modern psychology and its therapeutic outgrowths have been remarkable. As Roger Smith puts it, the “internalization of belief in psychological knowledge, so that it acquired a taken-for-granted quality, altered everyone's subjective world and recreated experience and expectations about what it is to be a person” (quoted in Eghigan 2007, 23).

Psychology, psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and psychiatry, which, following Nikolas Rose, I collect together under the umbrella term “psy-sciences” for convenience, provide banks of frameworks that shape individuals and institutions. These frameworks have helped produce a new and uniquely psychological conception of what being human means, while the modes of production and dissemination of these truths have solidified the place of a psychological self in public, private, and intellectual life.

The psy-sciences now help define and categorize personal behavior. An array of mental disorders have been named by experts and popularized in mass media: depression, generalized anxiety disorder, Asperger syndrome, PTSD, ADHD, bipolar disorder, seasonal anxiety disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, identity disorder, the list goes on. The drugs that ostensibly treat these and other disorders are some of the best-selling consumer items on the market, thanks in part to massive amounts of

direct-to-consumer media advertising (Altman 2009; Herzberg 2009; Reinberg, 2008). The companies that sell these drugs have generated fabulous wealth doing so. They have been particularly successful in America, and not just in treating adults. A 2008 study published in *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health* showed that “American children are three times more likely to be prescribed psychotropic medications for conditions such as ADHD and bipolar disease than European children” (Reinberg 2008).

Americans’ private lives have also been shaped by the rise of psychotherapy. More and more Americans have come into contact with psychiatrists and therapists in the decades following World War II. While the immediate postwar period was the first major growth period for the trade, the number of psychotherapists and psychiatrists continues to rise. “[T]he fourth largest [medical] specialty in the United States...psychiatry [grew] 86.7%” from 1970 to 2002 (Scully 2003). And yet, the even faster growth in the demand for their services has left psychiatrists struggling, and failing, to meet public need (Scully 2003). According to one 2010 analysis, “America is shy about 45,000 psychiatrists,” a shortage that will only get worse (Carlat, 2010). Americans have increasingly turned to the advice provided by certified experts in the psy-sciences for guidance on how to make the best of their lives.

The psy-sciences have also helped to shape American culture. Psychology departments are some of American universities’ most popular—psychology is American undergraduates’ second most chosen major, after business (Chute, 2008). Psychological experts often appear as guests on television programs and as authors of

editorials, in which they provide explanations for political, social, and cultural phenomena.¹ Tropes derived from psychotherapeutic discourse permeate scripted television shows and films.² The self-help industry has flourished in America, its products promising solutions for varied mental, emotional, and relationship problems. Television talk shows like *Oprah*, part of the self-help boom, have successfully moved talk therapy from private rooms to public screens (Illouz 2008; Moskowitz 2001). As Eva Moskowitz (2001) puts it, these television shows have made “confessing one’s personal problems...a subject of mass entertainment” (2001, 246).

The psy-sciences reach into politics as well. President Obama, for instance, appointed a number of behavioral economists to high-level positions in his administration. Behavioral economists belong to a school of thought dating back to the 1950s, one that fuses psychology and economics. As an NPR report about Obama’s small cadre of behavioral economists puts it, behavioral economists as a whole “took a good hard look at the human animal and found that people have a hard time making decisions” (Spiegel 2009). In the Obama administration, they “use psychology research to create behavioral incentives” (Spiegel 2009). In other words, as the title of the NPR report goes, behavioral economists are “Using Psychology to

¹ I examine several of these op-eds in Chapter Three. As for the prominent experts, American psychologist Philip Zimbardo, for instance, has used his famous 1971 Stanford prison experiment to remain known well into the 2000s. His 2007 book, *The Lucifer Effect*, uses the 1971 experiment to provide explanations for the 2004 prisoner abuses at Abu Ghraib. Zimbardo promoted the book with a lecture tour and appearances on television shows like *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*.

² For example; in television’s *Mad Men*, the character Don Draper, a creative director for an advertising firm, tussles with Dr. Faye Miller, a consultant brought in to advise the firm on the basis of her psychological expertise. Draper contests Miller’s claims on knowledge about human desires, referring to his personal experience and professional successes to challenge her claims. Like Draper’s chauvinism, Draper’s attitude toward Miller’s psychological expertise is presented as an outdated, misguided historical artifact.

Save You From Yourself” (Spiegel, 2009). The psy-sciences have also influenced political rhetoric, as James L. Nolan, Jr. (1998) argues in *The Therapeutic State*. According to Nolan, “contemporary political rhetoric” has acquired a definite “therapeutic impulse,” drawing more and more from the vocabulary of talk therapy and its stress on expressing feelings (1998, 259).³

Greg Eghigan (2004) uses the word “psychologization” to refer to the massive changes wrought by psy-sciences in public and private life. Nikolas Rose uses it in a more specifically Foucaultian sense, as a word referring to psychology “problematiz[ing]” given “domains, sites, problems, practices and activities” with terms supplied by psychological discourse. As Eghigan notes, an array of scholars have responded to psychologization (Eghigan 2004, 181-183). These cultural theorists, social theorists, philosophers and historians have alternately analyzed, critiqued, attacked and defended it. In my view, however, though these scholars ably chart the effects of psychologization on social relationships, institutional power, and culture, they provide limited discussion of psychologization’s specifically political ramifications. In much of the existing work on the rising influence of psy-sciences, scholars take the view that the social and cultural effects of psychologization are inherently political.

For instance, Eva Illouz (2008) argues that a “culture of self-help” has simultaneously “emotionalized” and “rationalized” personal relationships, to the detriment of more authentic sources of “identity” (2008, 150). Hope Landrine’s

³ Nolan traces American rhetoric up through the Clinton administration, but my own examination in Chapter Four reveals that the presidential oratory of the 2000s also showed signs of what Nolan calls a “therapeutic ethos” (1998, 279).

(1992) work aims to prove that the labels for mental illness reinforce the marginalization of lower-class social groups, and that those labels are, in fact, “political categories.” The anti-psychiatric attacks of Thomas Szasz criticize the imbalance of power between the psychiatrist and the patient, understanding the relationship between the two to be a political one. Medical authority gives the psychiatrist a despotic power over the patient, according to Szasz, so that authority must be stripped from him in order to secure greater equality, both inside and outside the psychiatrist’s office.⁴ The politics these authors address tends to be what Foucault and Deleuze termed “micropolitics,” the politics of organizations, or social groups. Nikolas Rose for instance, writes that

A political and rhetorical labor is involved in constructing a ‘translatability’ between the laboratory, the textbook, the manual, the academic course, the professional association, the courtroom, the factory, the family, the battalion , and so on—the diverse loci for the elaboration, utilization, and justification of psychological statements. (1996b, 110, emphasis added)

Politics, for Rose, are the relations enacted within and between those various institutions.

Primarily political thinkers, on the other hand, tend to address psychologization only tangentially, if at all. Many political scientists simply consider

⁴ Szasz (1974) uses political language to explain the psychiatrist-patient relationship: “Charcot and the other physicians who worked [at the Salpêtrière] functioned as *rulers* vis-à-vis their subjects... their relationship to each other was based on fear, awe, and deception” (21, emphasis added). He later ties modern psychiatry to class inequity: “In short,” Szasz writes, “Charcot and Guillotin made it easier for people—particularly for the socially downtrodden—to be ill and to die. Neither made it easier for people to be well and to live” (24). The power of the psychiatrist expands well beyond his appropriate domain: “they [Charcot and Guillotin] used their medical knowledge and prestige to help society shape itself into an image it found pleasing” (24). Michel Foucault (1994) explains that Szasz’s focus on the power imbalance between psychiatrist and patient is the point of departure for the entire anti-psychiatry movement, a movement Szasz helped lead (48).

the psy-sciences to be ‘harder’ sciences than their own, and they thus seek to emulate them in their own work. Sheldon Wolin (2004) quotes William Riler as a representative of the turn toward scientific methods in the study of politics: “‘To be scientific meant ris[ing] above the level of wisdom literature and...join[ing] economics and psychology in the creation of genuine sciences of human behavior’” (quoted in Wolin 2004, 571). For Riler and others, psychology is a “genuine” science whose empirical methods and measurable models are the kind political science ought to adopt.

Some political theorists, too, unreservedly revere the psy-sciences. Jürgen Habermas (2001), for instance, uses their terminology to support his work. In *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, Habermas imagines people described as mentally ill as limit cases for his discourse ethics’ applicability. For Habermas, certain rules apply to political actors. These rules are derived from conversations—the “communicative practice of everyday life” (Habermas 2001, 100). However, “serious mental illness” (100) destroys a person’s ability to live by those rules. At least, that is how Habermas presents the situation in his discussion of “value skeptics” like Nietzsche and Foucault (100). Such a “value skeptic,” according to Habermas, “may reject morality, but he cannot reject the ethical substance of the life circumstances in which he spends his waking hours, not unless he is willing to take refuge in suicide or serious mental illness” (100). In Habermas’ view, removing oneself from everyday life would be impossible except through suicide, mental illness, or as Habermas locates it more specifically, “schizophrenia” (101). In this way, Habermas uses what Roger Smith calls the “taken-for-granted quality” (quoted

in Eghigan 2007, 23) of the terms “mental illness” and “schizophrenia”—here taken for granted as experiences that lie outside the norms of everyday life—to give communicative action both universality and inescapability. Only the taken-for-granted strangeness of mental illness, or suicide, are possible alternatives to Habermas’ system. Habermas’ deployment of psychological knowledge, then, helps Habermas to conceptually support his system of discourse ethics.

Other political theorists, however, are more skeptical of the psy-sciences. For William Connolly, for example, ambiguity is an essential element of democracy. However, “*modern* democracy...by draw[ing] a larger portion of life into the fold of thematized norms has produced a threshold of normality,” one that excludes those who fall below it from full political life (Connolly 1987, 5, emphasis added). The psy-sciences help maintain this “threshold” by contributing to the “conventionalizations of life” (5). In Connolly’s view, politics should contest them: “Politics, again at its best, calls into question settlements sedimented into moral consensus, economic rationality, administrative procedure, legal propriety, psychiatric judgment, and ontological necessity” (16). For Connolly, though, the psy-sciences are simply one of many institutions contributing to a too-restrictive “threshold of normality.” His skepticism toward the psy-sciences is a facet of his broader antipathy toward normalizing institutions.

In my view, closer attention to the specifically political implications of psychologization is needed. There is no doubt that micropolitics do indeed shape “macropolitics.” Nor is there any doubt that culture and politics, at least as we know them today, are deeply intertwined. Nevertheless, “politics” in a more classical

sense—the state’s system of rule, the model citizen, the limits of the political imagination—have *also* been profoundly affected by the ascent and spread of the psy-sciences. I begin here, then, the work of charting the effects of psychologization on politics, tracing one political implication in particular: the production of an observably “psychologized” mode of citizenship.

In my first chapter, I bring into conversation the thinkers I believe best address the influence of the psy-sciences. These thinkers, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, and Nikolas Rose, help elucidate the political stakes of my discussion. With her notions of the “active life” and the public and private “realms” in which it takes place (Arendt 1998), Arendt provides criteria for the ‘good life’ attainable through politics. “What makes man a political being is his faculty of *action*” (Arendt 1972, 172, emphasis added), and the public realm is the space in which an individual acts. However, while Arendt identifies the “rise of the social” (1998) as the historical development that has most threatened the action and divided realms that constitute politics, Michel Foucault provides a more detailed account of what caused this “rise.” Foucault’s definitions of “discipline” (1995), “pastoral power” (1982, 2003, 2007) and “governmentality” (2007) help to explain how, as Arendt sees it, the social came to displace the public and the private. With this explanation in place, I then turn to the work of the British Foucaultian scholar Nikolas Rose. In his critique of twentieth century psy-sciences, Rose helps bridge the gap from the conceptual discussion between Arendt and Foucault to contemporary political realities. Rose’s “critical histories” of psychology trace what I describe as a network of pastoral power relations that psychologization has brought about. This network establishes

psychological “expertise” as such, and allows “psychological discourse” to establish itself as “truth” (1979). Rose brings Foucault’s concepts to bear on contemporary psy-sciences, examining them primarily as institutions that exert power. I use Rose’s work examining the psy-sciences’ use of techniques explained by Foucault to demonstrate that the psy-sciences have helped expand Arendt’s social realm. In the succeeding chapters, I frame Rose’s work in Arendtian terms, in order to clarify the political stakes of his “critical history’ ...of the self” (1996a).

In my second chapter, I apply the analytical tools derived from my theoretical discussion to examine the effect of psychologization on spaces Arendt would consider private. To do this, I trace the development of three “techniques,” or “technologies” (Rose 1996b, 121), employed by American psy-sciences together with governing institutions: standardized testing, talk-based psychotherapy, and psychotropic drugs. Connected respectively to World War I, World War II, and the immediate postwar period, each technology, as several historians show, was developed through close interactions between the psy-sciences and governing institutions—the military and large corporations. Creating each technology brought the psy-sciences and pastoral governing institutions into an increasingly tight symbiosis. The technologies themselves enabled governing institutions to penetrate into spaces Arendt argued ought to be private: a person’s unknown capacities, his emotional state, and his intimate relationships.

In my third chapter, I shift focus to the effects of psychologization on spaces that Arendt argued should be “public.” I examine texts that come from three identifiable periods in the development in America’s psy-sciences: first, with Freud’s

Civilization and Its Discontents, the dominance of psychoanalysis; second, with Watson's "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It" and Skinner's *Walden Two*, the rise of behaviorism; and finally, with several very recent op-eds, the shift toward explicitly "atheoretical," ostensibly more firmly grounded, modes of practicing psy-science. Despite the changing standards and preferences within the psy-scientific disciplines, an important continuity runs through these texts. In each, those with psychological expertise assume that their expertise provides them alone with a fully developed capacity to administer "society." Each text cements the notion of politics as a craft, which Arendt believed to be antithetical to the action required in political life. Further, the authors all conceive of their wider community as something akin to an organism, one that requires the kind of treatment established by their respective disciplines for treating an individual *person*. This repeated theoretical move, as I will discuss, is directly hostile to Arendt's understanding of the public realm as a gathering of free individuals in their plurality.

In my fourth and final chapter, I first draw attention to the explicitly political impact of American psychologization by analyzing several speeches from presidents and potential presidents in the 1960s and the twenty-first century: John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, Barry Goldwater, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama. This rhetorical analysis ties together the trends I charted in the first three chapters, marking a clear shift in conceptions of citizenship from one era to the other. While in the 1960s, the citizen as conceived of in rhetoric had active qualities and was accorded a public space distinct from private space, the citizen as understood in the rhetoric of the twenty-first century has been thoroughly psychologized—reduced to the apolitical

role of ‘building’ society as per guidelines best developed in private space, space now inescapably governed by the psy-sciences. Following my rhetorical analysis, I consider a few sources for potentially ‘re-activating’ the contemporary model of citizenship.

I rely heavily on textual analysis in this project first to derive analytical tools from the work of Arendt, Foucault, and Rose. I then use these tools to read histories and primary sources. I take this approach for several reasons. First, comprehensive historical surveys of the psy-sciences already exist, and to attempt to combine a new one with a discourse analysis would distract from the primary goal of eliciting a political trend. Second, detailed engagement of a limited number of sources allows me to show each of the important mechanisms at work in a given case, rather than attempting to prove the existence of each mechanism by providing a number of cursory verifying examples for it. The theoretical vocabulary I come to has several layers to it, but so does each case I examine. What I sacrifice in breadth I hope to make up for in depth.

Because I use so few to illustrate the trends, the selection of texts itself is important. In Chapter Two, then, I do my best to contrast a more mainstream, progressive history of psychology with histories influenced by Foucault’s work. I believe this helps illustrate the value of using Foucault’s descriptions to explain Arendt’s conceptual frameworks. In Chapter Three, I select primary sources that display, in distilled form, the psy-sciences’ conception of political community as a uniform social whole. The texts by Freud, Skinner, and Watson clarify what Rose refers to as the “vocation” of the psy-sciences (1990, 103). They express how major

psychological theorists believed their expertise could be best applied to public life. The op-eds signal a shift within the psy-sciences away from reliance on the theories of prominent experts and toward a more dissipated, explicitly experimental style of producing truth. Popular media, where op-eds like this are found, is an important vehicle for the dissemination of psy-scientific findings today. As American experimental psychologist Phillip Zimbardo put it in 2001, “the media is the gatekeeper between psychology and the public” (quoted in Mason 2001). In my last chapter, I do still more readings. I analyze political rhetoric to draw together the trends identified in previous chapters in order to show their relation to psychologized citizenship.

Of course, my selection of texts is necessarily incomplete, and is, to a certain extent, unavoidably arbitrary. I attempt to bring the discourses of very different disciplines into dialogue, and in doing so, I lose some of the subtlety each discipline offers when considered on its own. Nikolas Rose, for instance, addresses the technologies used by the psy-sciences and how they create his own version of what he calls the “social territory” far more thoroughly than I do, but, in my understanding, he has no political criteria with which to assess those technologies. Nevertheless, each chapter in this project seems to demand further study in order to provide more grounds for the connections I draw between the psy-sciences and the encroachment of the social realm. Even my adoption of the very term “social realm” is rife with complications and brings with it questions that are difficult to definitively answer: What exactly did Arendt mean by it? What are the implications of trying to apply it the analysis of a specific phenomenon? As I discuss, the opinions Arendt derived

from her clean division of the social from the political have provoked controversy and have led many to completely reject this central theoretical move of hers. I will address why I find these criticisms to be unconvincing in my discussion of Arendt's concepts.

Further, to use Foucault's work to supplement Arendt's is a questionable tactic. According to Charles Taylor (1989), Foucault, in person, explicitly contested Arendt's hope in pluralistic freedom. According to Taylor, during an interview:

We were left in no doubt that [Foucault] saw [Arendt's] kind of project as based on an illusion, and moreover on a dangerous illusion, in the sense that the hopes placed in such a 'free' regime could easily lead one to ignore or gloss over and hence to exacerbate its effects of power/domination. The example of *gulag*, erected in the land of really existing socialism, was always uppermost in his mind. (1989, 278)

Arendt's prescriptive focus appears to be at odds with Foucault's rigorously descriptive projects. On the other hand, Arendt scholar Dana Villa finds Foucault to be overly preoccupied with the strategies, techniques, or technologies of power. According to Villa, Foucault's work creates a "dystopian public" where "the fight for what Arendt called the 'objective, public world' seems to be over before it is even begun" (2008, 300-301). In Villa's view, Foucault's work adds an unnecessary layer of pessimism to the project of resisting problems already identified by Arendt as monumental enough.

I acknowledge, then, that Foucault and Arendt would both likely find a theoretical combination of their work to be contrary to their respective purposes. Nevertheless, there are enough similarities between the two thinkers to make an application of them together worthwhile. Even Foucault, the consistently anti-normative thinker, turns in his *History of Sexuality* to the study of ancients in an effort

to locate modes of subjectivity different from, and ostensibly better than, the modes currently available. Conversely, for all her sweeping analyses and arbitrary-seeming frameworks, Arendt displays a serious if underdeveloped interest in modes of subjectivity and technologies of power, as is especially apparent in her development of the notion of “rule by nobody.” Above all, both Arendt and Foucault reject the claim that modernity’s destruction of various taboos and limitations on human life has been purely liberating. For both Arendt and Foucault, the entry of once hidden aspects of human life into the open, especially into the realm of permissible *speech*, has often been just as oppressive as it has been freeing.

As I apply the work of both Arendt and Foucault to the study of the political effects of psychologization, I do my best to remain faithful to their differences, but also to their shared interests. Nevertheless, I do not hesitate to admit that I am primarily loyal to Arendt in this discussion. My use of the work of Foucault and Rose is primarily meant to supplement and clarify Arendt’s. Their work helps show the applicability of Arendt’s concepts to psychologization and helps to draw the connection between psychologization to politics.

It could be argued that the psy-sciences have in fact contributed to the fostering of more truly democratic communities. The proponents of the psy-sciences have made such claims. As mental testing was being developed, for instance, they argued that it would lead to a more fully realized meritocracy everywhere it was implemented, from schools to the workplace. It could also be argued that psychotherapy, by breaking down taboos, helped pave the way to the openness and greater equality of the 1960s’ sexual revolution. The emotional aspect of human life

was given its proper role, and thus politics was diversified. Sources of unnecessary shame were removed by the advance of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, allowing for people to attain dignity even with debilitating or socially unacceptable mental disorders.

I address both these strands of argument—the first, that applied psychology could improve democracy by making group life more meritocratic, and the second, that uncovering intimate aspects of a person’s identity has been liberating. I argue in Chapter Two that technologies like testing that ostensibly produce a purer meritocracy in fact work primarily to subjugate the individual to the needs of governing institutions. Further, in my discussion of intimacy and the private and public realm in Chapter One, I argue that making inner life public, while it does have the potential to free an individual, also threatens to swallow up that which makes intimate life unique.

I will argue that psychologization—the changes brought about by the rising influence of the psy-sciences over the past century—has impacted politics in America in ways best understood with the help of Hannah Arendt. In Arendtian terms, terms which I clarify in the next chapter, the psy-sciences have assisted in expanding the social realm into spaces once reserved for private and public life, changing and degrading both those spaces in the process. The division of private from public is a necessary one for individuals’ political faculty, which Arendt believes to be action. Psychologization, in its penetration of the individual and of the public realm, has helped to produce not only new modes of individuality, but a new mode of citizenship as well. This psychologized citizenship is inactive, preoccupied with inner experience

and directed toward building a uniform ‘society’—each citizen is urged, in William Connolly’s words, “to be a stone in an edifice” (1987, 4).

CHAPTER ONE

Restraining Action: The Social Realm's Use of Pastoral Power

Tucson reminded us that no matter who we are or where we come from, each of us is a part of something greater—something more consequential than party or political preference. We are part of the American family.

—President Barack Obama, 2011 State of the Union Address

Psychologization, the popularizing and internalizing of the expertise of the psy-sciences, has helped produce a model of psychologized citizenship that, in certain respects, is antithetical to democratic practice, especially as that practice is defined by Hannah Arendt. In this chapter, I assemble the theoretical vocabulary necessary for discussing psychologized citizenship. I derive this vocabulary primarily from Hannah Arendt's work, but I refine and expand it by drawing from the work of Michel Foucault and the work of Foucaultian scholar Nikolas Rose. In so doing, I attempt to turn Arendt's incomplete critique of the psy-sciences into a more focused one, while still retaining a commitment to Arendt's definitions of "action" and the "public realm."

Here, I am primarily concerned with providing a reading of several of Arendt's concepts in order to identify the political stakes of psychologization. First, I consider concepts that Arendt ties to ancient Athens—clearly divided public and private "realms," and "action," the human faculty that Arendt says "makes man a political being" (1972, 172). I then explain Arendt's concept of "the social" and how its "rise" removed action from politics. Arendt points to the development of bureaucracy, "the social form of government" (1998, 40), as a major facilitator of the

rise of the social. I then turn to Michel Foucault's descriptions of "discipline" and "pastoral power" in order to better understand how Arendt's "social" functions. This turn also elaborates on Arendt's discussion of the modes of subjectivity created in what she calls "society." Finally, I specify the salient instance of Foucault's "pastoral power" for this study by incorporating Nikolas Rose's work on the interactions between government and the psy-sciences. Rose's work examines the network of pastoral power relations established during the twentieth century by the proliferation of the psy-sciences and their techniques. Having established a theoretical vocabulary for addressing the political impacts of psychologization in this chapter, I move in the succeeding two chapters to a study of psychologization's effects on what Arendt would consider "private" and "public" spaces. I find that psychologization has assisted in the continued expansion of the "social" into those spaces, to the detriment of active citizenship.

Arendt's "Realms"

In her 1958 *The Human Condition* (1998), Hannah Arendt thinks through the meaning of politics and their relation to the *vita activa*, the "active life" prized by pre-Socratic Greeks. As Arendt scholar and political theorist Dana Villa writes, *The Human Condition* "delve[s] behind or beneath the intervening layer of our philosophic tradition—a tradition in many respects hostile to politics—in order to bring forth, in 'crystallized' form, the phenomenological bases of politics as practiced by diverse equals in a public space" (2008, 319). By rooting her work in the exegesis of ancient texts, bringing them to bear on contemporary conditions and deploying

them in sweeping critiques of the Western philosophical canon, Arendt unsettles traditional definitions of “action,” “work,” “labor,” the “private,” the “public,” and “society.” The first set of terms Arendt addresses in *The Human Condition* is “the public and the private realm” (1998, 22), as her second chapter is titled. Arendt looks to ancient Athens, where she believes the division between the two realms was clear, to clarify the traits of the public and the private. Though Arendt believes that these realms no longer exist as they once did, she argues that they are necessary for active politics.

According to Arendt, the public realm has two important characteristics. The first is that it is a space of *appearance*, in which individuals act and speak in the presence of other individuals who share the ability to act and speak: “everything that appears in public can be seen and heard by everybody... For us, appearance... constitutes reality” (Arendt 1998, 50). This space of appearance is constituted by the various individuals before whom acts and words appear: “the reality of the public realm relies on the simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives and aspects... for which no common measurement or denominator can ever be devised” (57). The second important characteristic of the public realm is that it is “the common” (50). It is made up of the shared “world” of “human artifact, the fabrication of human hands,” that is, works, “as well as [the] affairs which go on among those who inhabit the man-made world” (52). In Arendt’s understanding, this common, shared world, the “object” (58) upon which the differing perspectives of individuals are focused, “relates and separates men at the same time,” like a “table” (52).

The private realm, on the other hand, exists in “home and family life” (Arendt 1998, 27). According to Arendt, it is as central to a full life as the public realm. As she writes, “prior to the modern age... [p]rivacy was like the other, the dark and hidden side of the public realm, and while to be political meant to attain the highest possibility of human existence, to have no private place of one’s own (like a slave) meant to be no longer human” (1998, 64). For Arendt, the “property” (58) that constitutes the private realm is spatial and bears no relation to material goods, or “wealth” (61). Rather, “property” in the ancient sense gives individuals space for “harbor[ing] the things hidden from human eyes and impenetrable to human knowledge” (62), things like love, friendship, and the life processes of birth and death (51). That the private realm is “dark” is especially important for Arendt—it provides a needed respite from the “bright light” produced by the witness of others in the public realm (51).

The public and private realms, though wholly separate, depend on one another. The public gives the private a sense of reality: “even the twilight which illuminates our private and intimate lives is ultimately derived from the much harsher light of the public realm” (Arendt 1998, 51). The private, conversely, gives an individual the depth necessary to be a fully human actor in public. It also ensures that the individual’s biological needs are cared for so that the individual can focus energy on public activities. Thus, for a time in ancient Athens, a citizen who “happened to lose his location,” a private home, also “almost automatically lost his citizenship and the protection of the law as well” (62). What Arendt calls the “rise of the social” would displace both the public and private realms. However, before delving into

Arendt's definition of the "social," I first examine her definition of that which the social restricts—"action," the faculty that belongs in the public realm.

Arendt's "Action"

Arendt seeks to draw sharper lines around the definition of "action," arguing that the definitions used for it in philosophy and contemporary politics confuse it with the distinct faculties of "work" and "labor." "Labor" as Arendt understands it, is a "verbal noun" (Arendt 1998, 80). It is a process connected to the "metabolic life processes" in two ways—people labor in order to sustain life, but labor itself resembles life in its *reproductive*, circular nature (80). As Arendt explains, "the productivity of labor power produces objects only incidentally and is primarily concerned with the means of its own reproduction...it never 'produces' anything but life" (88). "Work," in contrast, refers to the "addition of new objects to the human artifice" (88). Work refers to making works—the objects that constitute the shared, "durable" human world (136). For the ancient Greeks, even legislating was considered to be work, as laws were part of the durable world. They created the "inclosure" around the public realm, but were not themselves part of it (64).

"Action," as Arendt defines it, consists of novel words and deeds spoken and performed in the public realm. "By beginning something new" with an action, an individual achieves something "like a second birth" (Arendt 1998, 246, 176). Whereas labor maintains and reproduces biological life, and work produces the durable, common objects of the public realm, action alone can *begin*, and therefore action alone "interrupts" biological life's never-ending "running toward death"

(Arendt 1998, 246). Thus, action “looks like a miracle” from the perspective of biological life processes (246), but also from the perspective of “the overwhelming odds of statistical laws and their probability” (178). Arendt does not use the term “looks” casually—that action *appears* to others is one of its most important characteristics (Villa 2008, 320). In this way, to act, and thus to begin, requires the public realm. The witness of others alone makes an action “appear and be real” in other minds, as Arendt puts it in *On Revolution* (1963, 31).

From the perspective of the actor, words and deeds “reveal ‘who’” the actor is to others, “in contradistinction to ‘what’ somebody is—his qualities, his gifts, talents, and shortcomings, which he may display or hide” (Arendt 1998, 179). “What” an individual contributes to his ability to labor or the quality of work he produces. However, the “who” of an actor is his “unique personal identit[y]” (179). The “who” refers to the “specific difference” (181) of each actor, while “qualities...could possibly [be] share[d] with other living beings” (181). Even an individual’s works take on their own meaning, independent of who created them. As Arendt explains, “action without a name, a ‘who’ attached to it, is meaningless, whereas an art work retains its relevance whether or not we know the master’s name” (181). The “who” of the actor is *revealed* in deeds and words to others, to whom the “who” is observable, while the actor himself can never fully perceive “who” he himself is (179). Because this identity exists fully only for others, only others have the ability to keep the memory of the revealed “who” alive past the actor’s physical death. Action is the one faculty that provides for a level of immortality—it allows for the unique identity of the individual to live on via others’ commemoration.

However, because action depends on *witnesses* to give it and the actor meaning, the actor cannot determine the effects of his action. Action is therefore the most dangerous of the three active faculties. It begins unpredictable, uncontrollable and “irreversib[le]” narratives (Arendt 1998, 233). Once the actor acts, the consequences of his action are determined by the “web of relationships” (181) between people. An action spreads through these webs like a current, with unforeseen rippling effects that have no clear stopping point. As Arendt writes, “action has no end. The process of a single deed can quite literally endure throughout time until mankind itself has come to an end” (233). One who acts, then, “is the subject in the twofold sense of the word” (184)—he is a subject in that he acts on the world, but he is also subject *to* the unpredictable results of his action. However, the individual has two types of actions which guard against the danger of the faculty as a whole: first, “the power to forgive,” which is “the possible redemption from the predicament of irreversibility,” and second, “the faculty to keep and make promises,” which is “the remedy for unpredictability” (236-237). Promises and forgiveness, however, like all action, also require publicity, “for no one can forgive himself and no one can feel bound to a promise made only to himself” (237).

According to Arendt, the ancient Athenians prized action above all other faculties. They had a “passionate impatience with every effort that left no trace, no monument, no great work worthy of remembrance,” eventually “everything that demanded an effort” except for “political activities” (Arendt 1998, 81). However, beginning in earnest with Plato’s *Republic* (Arendt 1998, 221), conceptions of politics began de-valuing action, finding its uncontrollable nature too dangerous for it to be

admirable. Instead, political philosophy began to conceive of political life as a craft, commencing what Arendt calls “the traditional substitution of making for acting” (220). As Villa puts it, Arendt is “emphatic about the profound and anti-democratic consequences that such a rebellion against the ‘human condition of plurality’ entails” (2008, 322). Freedom began to take on its modern definition as the freedom to live out private life without interference from outside authority, as opposed to the freedom to participate openly in the public realm. This caused an isolation of the individual from others. Both action and the stark division between public and private were lost. Arendt identifies “the rise of the social” as the main factor in the removal of the public, the private, and action from the world.

“The Rise of the Social” Against Action

As Arendt sees it, political life in the West has lost all sense of the proper relationship between the public and private realms. “Through many ages before us,” she writes, “but now not any more—men entered the public realm because they wanted something of their own or something they had in common with others to be more permanent than their earthly lives” (1998, 55). According to Arendt, action and the public realm it clears space for were “devour[ed]” (45) by the social realm, which “blurred” (29) the distinction between the private and the public. The social realm, Arendt believes, originated in the elevation of concerns that belonged in the private realm—mainly the pursuit of wealth—to the status of public things. “[W]ith the rise of society,” Arendt writes in *The Human Condition*, “that is, the rise of the ‘household’ or of economic activities to the public realm, housekeeping and all

matters pertaining formerly to the private sphere of the family have become a ‘collective’ concern” (1998, 33). Biological needs came to occupy public space—thus, the very idea of “political economy” (29).

Society, according to Arendt, supplanted the public realm with one modeled after the private realm, a collective household. As Arendt writes, “we [now] see the body of peoples and political communities in the image of a family whose everyday affairs have to be taken care of by a gigantic, nation-wide administration of housekeeping” (29). The social realm grew from the expansion of political communities, the entry of more members into them, the rise of statistics to measure them, and the development of a notion of “social wealth” in which the material gain of the whole political community, like a family, was thought of as a collective pursuit.

This family-like model of political community has had definite consequences for the individual as a political being. With the rise of the social came an understanding of political participants themselves as members of the same household. According to Arendt, this was particularly apparent when the modern nation-state was taking form. In Arendt’s view, the development of economics as a scientific discipline in the late eighteenth century depended on the fact that “men had become social beings and unanimously followed certain patterns of behavior, so that those who did not keep the rules could be considered to be asocial or abnormal” (Arendt 1998, 42). The expanding size of political communities made it easier to apply generalized characteristics to them, making increasingly irresistible norms of

behavior. All “social” sciences that followed from economics would also depend on this understanding of the person as a predictable “social animal.”

The development of the social science of economics was the early indication of the social’s triumph, while the “behavioral sciences” were more recent indicators—showing a more penetrating control over individuals’ lives. Modern psychology, for instance, could only be a viable enterprise once individuals *behaved* rather than *acted*; once individuals’ every activity could be categorized as “social” or “antisocial.” Any attempt to break out of these patterns could then be labeled, and treated, as “antisocial” behavior. Conceiving of a polity as a household assumes that all have shared interests in the family’s order and economic well-being, and action, in its disorderly, dangerous nature, threatens to disrupt order and well-being. Acting, plurality, and, increasingly, remembering, had little place in a structure so uniformly concerned with the reproduction of its own life. Rather, like the philosopher-king of Plato’s *Republic*, the political individual in the “nation-wide” household was instructed to approach politics as a craft, as something to shape and *control* with a sovereign, monolithic will (Arendt 1998, 221). Society “excludes the possibility of action” while “[i]nstead, . . . imposing innumerable and various rules, all of which tend to ‘normalize’ its members, to make them behave, to exclude spontaneous action or outstanding achievement” (Arendt 1998, 40). Normalization makes action impermissible, turning the presence of others from an invitation to “distinguish” oneself (41) into a suffocating mandate for homogeneity. Thus, the rise of the social denigrated the public realm and faculty of action.

But by creating a system of norms for behavior, the social also extended into spaces formerly occupied by the private realm (Arendt 1998, 59). Once behavior, rather than action, was the predominant mode of human activity, it had to conform to a set of shared standards. As the household model was extended to the common, the privacy of the actual household was threatened. The social, by making private interests “the only common concern left” (69), destroyed what the ancients valued in privacy—its provision for a space to “hide” from the “light of publicity,” and its clarification of the “distinguishing line between freedom and necessity” (71). The public was the realm of freedom, while the private was the realm of necessity, but the social confused this separation. Arendt argues that the development of what we know as “intimacy” was a hostile reaction to this consumption of the private realm (40). What Arendt calls the “discovery” of intimacy by Rousseau came from “a rebellion not against the oppression of the state but against society’s unbearable perversion of the human heart, its intrusion upon an innermost region in man which until then had needed no special protection” (39). However, “the intimate is not a very reliable substitute” for the private realm, in Arendt’s view (70). Though what it contains and what it hides are essential parts of being human, the contents of the intimate need *protection* from a “privately owned place to hide in” (71).

The Social Realm’s System of Government: “Rule by Nobody”

According to Arendt, the rise of the social evolved political structures away from their classical forms—monarchy, aristocracy, *polis*; tyranny, oligarchy, democracy—toward a “social form of government,” bureaucracy (1998, 40).

Bureaucracies, Arendt argues, prevent the establishment of a public realm and the action that would take place in it. Their dispersion of accountability through complex, impenetrable, unresponsive management structures amount to the worst form of government yet to be installed among people, in terms of its effects on the good life available in politics. As Arendt says in her essay, “On Violence” (1972), “in a fully developed bureaucracy there is nobody left with whom one can argue, to whom one can present grievances, on whom the pressures of power can be exerted” (1972, 178). Accountability is so dispersed in a bureaucracy that Arendt names it a “rule by nobody.”

However, as Arendt made clear in *The Human Condition*, “nobody” wields universalizing and deeply penetrating power. Rather than a person, the bureaucratic “nobody” is “the assumed one interest of society as a whole in economics,” and “it may indeed, under certain circumstances, even turn out to be one of [rule’s] cruelest and most tyrannical versions” (Arendt 1998, 40). Arendt eventually removed all conditional language from her discussion of bureaucracy. In “On Violence,” Arendt states unequivocally: “if, in accord with traditional political thought, we identify tyranny as government that is not held to give account of itself, rule by Nobody is *clearly* the most tyrannical of all, since there is no one left who could even be asked to answer for what is being done” (1972, 137-138, emphasis added). Arendt’s “nobody” represents an assumed shared interest, but it also means, literally, “nobody.” In a bureaucracy, the authority of government is enacted by a vast network of operations that are diffuse, untraceable, and essentially *invisible*, making it impossible for political participants to act on them. The space of appearance is

clouded by bureaucracy—bureaucrats, the agents of government, hide behind regulation and procedure, unseen, while the individuals they keep track of are turned from individuals into statistics. Meanwhile, those who hold more visible positions in government hide behind the complexity of the bureaucracies they ostensibly direct in order to avoid full accountability.⁵ Though personal agents of oppression are nowhere to be found, political participants' power of action is blocked. So, when Arendt was writing during the Vietnam years, she claimed that “the huge [political] party machines” in America and Western Europe had “succeeded everywhere in overruling the voice of the citizens,” even though “freedom of speech and association [was] still intact” (1972, 178). Words were spoken and deeds done, but there was “nobody” for them to affect. Like the “household members” in the *polis*, individuals in a bureaucracy are equal, but only “before the despotic power of the household head” (Arendt 1998, 27), a head who, in a bureaucracy, is “nobody.”

Critiques of Arendt's Concept of the Social

In her lifetime, Arendt applied her sharp division of the social from the political to her thinking on contemporary politics. Her resulting opinions are controversial. They appear to lend some credence to those, like Sheldon Wolin, who charge Arendt with “elitism.” According to Arendt, furthering the acceptance of a new social norm or a group which defines itself primarily in terms of “identity” does not constitute a political action. It would not be an Arendtian action, for instance, to

⁵ The lack of accountability in a bureaucracy is one of its most frightening, tyrannical aspects. In a February 23, 2011 television interview, for instance, former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld defensively cited the number of people employed by the Department of Defense in order to downplay his role in pushing for an invasion of Iraq. (<http://www.thedailyshow.com/>)

march in a rally to sustain funding for social services, nor even, remarkably, to speak against the racial desegregation of certain spaces. In “Reflections on Little Rock” (2003a), Arendt controversially argued that the black parents who sent their children to what had been a white school in an attempt to desegregate it did so “for social reasons” rather than political reasons (2003a, 195). Schools, because they involved the education of children—non-political subjects of the private realm—were social, not political, spaces. The government should not be able to tell a parent “in whose company [the parent’s] child received its instruction” (Arendt 2003a, 195).

For Arendt, having a well-defined private realm meant that one should be able to spend one’s private time with whomever one pleased. So, in Arendt’s view, all social spaces, including not just schools but private clubs as well, should be constituted as its members saw fit, even if that meant members’ excluding people of other races, ethnicities, or the opposite sex. As Arendt saw it, parents, had the right to determine the nature of their children’s education, even if their preferences were based on objectionable racial prejudices. However, the separation of the social from the political also led Arendt to oppose all *legal* enforcement of segregation, like anti-miscegenation laws (Arendt 2003a, 194; Kohn 2003, xxxiv). To her, they infringed upon the *private* right to marry anyone one chose. Similarly, Arendt opposed the segregation of spaces she considered public, like theaters and buses, as the make-up of these spaces determined one’s political equality as a citizen. In short, for Arendt, it was “not discrimination and social segregation, in whatever forms, but racial legislation [that] constitutes the perpetuation of the original crime in this country’s history” (2003a, 197). So while Arendt’s division of the social from the political led

her to take unpopular positions, to characterize Arendt as an “anti-democratic” thinker seems unjustified to me.⁶

Arendt’s portrayal of “the social” is controversial not just for its perceived elitism, but for the almost life-like quality Arendt gives it. Political theorist Hanna Pitkin (1998), for instance, claims Arendt’s “social” is both an unnecessary addition to established political vocabulary and an absurdly monolithic theoretical conceit. Pitkin mocks Arendt’s understanding, claiming it comes from the same anxieties that motivated contemporaneous 1950s science fiction, in her *Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt’s Concept of the Social*. However, to me, Arendt’s concept of the social and its attendant form of government form a convincing framework. It seems clear that privacy has been crushed beyond recovery by instruments of the social, like the mass media Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) identified as the “culture industry.” On the other hand, many theorists, like Sheldon Wolin (2004), lament the loss of “the political,” but none seem to establish what exactly has been lost as clearly as Arendt does with her concept of the social. These losses seem profound enough, and “the assumed one interest of society as a whole in economics” powerful enough, to merit a metaphor that conveys a sense of desperate urgency about the disappearance of action and a public realm.

⁶ After all, though integration is now sacred in political discourse—while certainly not at all in political practice (given widespread opposition to busing and the continued *de facto* segregation of Northern schools, et cetera [Kohn makes a similar point in his 2003 “Note on the Text”])—whether integration was the best policy to remedy systemic injustice towards blacks was hotly debated by the black community well into the 1970s. Black Nationalists like Malcolm X, for instance, strongly opposed it. In short, to disagree with liberal prescriptions for what best constitutes “justice” does not necessarily make one anti-democratic or elitist.

Nevertheless, Arendt leaves open major questions about “the social” and the “rule by nobody.” For instance, how exactly does rule by nobody function? What mechanisms specifically work to restrain action? How is the behaving, social individual shaped, and what are that individual’s important features? The answers to these questions are underdeveloped in Arendt’s work, simply because they are not Arendt’s primary focus. Nevertheless, their further elaboration would provide additional support for Arendt’s “blob”-like concept of the social. For answers to these questions, I first turn to the work of Michel Foucault on discipline, power, and knowledge. As I do so, the role of the psy-sciences as a primary cause of the social realm’s continued expansion begins to emerge.

Foucaultian Power and Its Social Modality, “Discipline”

Foucault’s understanding of power clarifies the strategies, or as he would say, the “techniques,” used by contemporary political and social institutions. Like Nietzsche, by creating genealogies that uncover the contested histories of accepted social discourse—like understandings of sexuality, madness, and criminality—Foucault radically challenges the foundations that discourse depends on for its status as truth. Genealogies aim to display the historical “struggles” involved in the “production” of that truth. Foucault explains that:

what [genealogy] really does is to entertain the claims to attention of local, discontinuous, disqualified, illegitimate knowledges against the claims of a unitary body of theory which would filter, hierarchise and order them in the name of some true knowledge and some arbitrary idea of what constitutes a science and its objects. (2002, 1103)

Foucault’s genealogies uncover the inseparability of power from truth in all discourse—the “power-knowledge” relationship. In short, this relationship is located

in the reality that “we are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth” (Foucault 2002, 1107). People and institutions shape discourse and discourse shapes people and institutions, but they do so with strategies determined by what is considered true at the time. In other words, “power produces knowledge...power and knowledge directly imply one another...there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (Foucault 1995, 72). Power’s main function is a productive one, not a repressive one. “The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle” (Foucault 2002, 1110). Power produces individuals themselves, but individuals can also exert power. Thus, power need not be exerted in a top-down, hierarchical fashion. In the modern era, according to Foucault, it generally is not (2002, 1008).

The *strategies* of power concern Foucault more than the outcomes of their enactment, as the strategies themselves are what produce unevenness in power relations (2002, 1111; 1995, 223). According to Foucault, “the bourgeoisie could not care less about delinquents...but it is concerned about the complex of *mechanisms* with which delinquency is controlled, pursued, punished and reformed” (1980, 1111, emphasis added). Over the course of the modern era, power’s strategies have moved away from classically defined sovereign acts, toward “discipline,” defined as the surveillance and “non-corporal” punishment of a subject. Realized fully in the panoptic prison model, discipline spread to all the West’s major social institutions—

“factories, schools, barracks, hospitals” (1995, 228). It works through a vast network that shapes the individual on the “infinitely” subtle level of “micro-physics.”

Discipline, then, operates not on the level of the body but on the level of the “soul,” a soul that it creates. Foucault’s understanding of discipline’s production of the soul clarifies “power-knowledge” and its production of the conceptual sources of selfhood.

The soul, Foucault writes:

is born...out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint. This real, non-corporal soul is not a substance; it is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge, the machinery by which the power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power. (1977, 29)

Thus, for Foucault, individuality cannot be separated from the power exerted on individuals by institutions and other individuals. Individuality—which might be defined as the knowledge of certain truths about how one relates to one’s self, others, and the world—is a *product* of power. Selves are conditioned by the system of power-knowledge they are born into, no matter what the system’s mode of enforcement. For the modern self, however, disciplinary techniques have been the dominant modality of power.

Discipline and Punish illustrates the shift toward discipline from sovereignty in its opening historical examples. In the first, Damiens, the would-be assassin of King Louis XV, has his muscles torn out and filled with hot metal, his limbs pulled by horses and then chopped off, and his torso impaled on a spike by the agents of the king (1995, 3-6). This, Foucault argues, is a quintessential exercise of sovereign power: spectacular, ceremonial, and directed at the body (1995, 8-9, 34). But this mode of power was already on the wane by the time of Damiens’ execution in 1757.

The regimented schedule of activities for prisoners drawn up at a Paris prison “eighty years later” demonstrated the state’s increasing preference for discipline (1995, 6).

I argue that the social realm, as Arendt defines it, has expanded through discipline, as Foucault defines it. Foucault would deny Arendt in her claim that the rise of society took something fundamental from humanity, but they would at least agree that modern power has created a kind of person unknown to the ancients. Foucault’s discipline supplements Arendt’s definition of the social realm, helping answer one of the central question her definition leaves open—how does “rule by nobody” function? Arendt argues that it helped move the faculty labor out of the home and into common space. As this happened, “the laborers were hidden away,” according to Arendt, “segregated from the community *like criminals* behind high walls and under constant *supervision*” (1998, 73, emphasis added). As Arendt tells it, then, this process had a distinctly disciplinary character. Foucault gives the enactment of this process a name and shows that identical strategies of supervision were eventually, in the modern age, used on individuals in nearly every sphere of their lives. Foucault’s characterization of discipline as constitutive of the individual resonates with Arendt’s work, which often decries how successfully the social realm has molded individuals from acting, political beings into behaving, social beings. Foucault’s work on discipline and the “docile bodies” it creates is a more detailed, probing account of what Arendt identified when she appropriated the term “social animal.” Foucault’s description of “pastoral power” gives further insight into how the social realm functions, providing a complementary understanding of its two-way movement into the private and public.

Foucault's "Pastoral Power"

Both Arendt and Foucault analyze the role of the shepherd in Plato's *Statesman*. They both point out that the shepherd is, for Plato, an improper model for political activity. Arendt writes in *The Human Condition* that:

Plato knew quite well that his favorite analogies taken from household life, such as the master-slave or the shepherd-flock relationship, would demand a quasi-divine quality in the ruler of men to distinguish him as sharply from his subjects as the slaves are distinguished from the master or the sheep from the shepherd. (1998, 227)

Plato found the model of the shepherd to be outside the reach of mere mortals, while the model of the "craftsman...carried with it only the implication of ordinary mastership" and was thus attainable (Arendt 1998, 227). As Arendt tells it, Plato's "substitution of making for acting" was carried through the political philosophy that followed Plato's, from antiquity to Marx. Foucault, however, in the lectures published as *Security, Territory, Population*, draws attention to Plato's preference for the model of the "weaver" (145, 2007) over the model of the shepherd because, in Foucault's view, it is a preference that was abandoned as the modern state was created. According to Foucault, "pastoral power"—power that follows the model of the shepherd—underlies the predominant modes of modern power. It is the type of authority sought and exercised by the state and other governing institutions.

Clare O'Farrell summarizes Foucault's concept of pastoral power in this way:

The modern State...consists of the convergence of a very particular set of techniques, rationalities and practices designed to govern or guide people's conduct as individual members of a population and also to organize them as a political and civil collective in the same way as a shepherd who cares for his flock from birth to death. (2007)

While this understanding has similarities with the idea of a politician as a craftsman, especially in its construction of the political community as a unified “flock,” it adds the element of what Foucault calls “individualizing” (1982, 782). That is, it is a kind of authority that is focused on both the whole of a unified community, but also on each individual *member* of that community. Pastoral power uses an array of techniques, including but not limited to discipline, to shape the individual and the whole. As Foucault explains, “it is true that the shepherd directs the whole flock, but he can only really direct it insofar as not a single sheep escapes him” (2007, 128). In other words, pastoral power, which underlies the “modern state,” is “both an individualizing and a totalizing form of power” (1982, 782).

Foucault uses the term “pastoral power” to specify the form of power that helped governmentalize the state—that is, a kind of authority wielded by institutions that the state increasingly took up as it made its modern turn towards controlling the lives of its subjects. Foucault keeps the qualifier “pastoral” in order to retain its association with its point of origin, the Christian Church. It was in its form as the priest’s power over his congregants, a power with the aim of helping the faithful toward salvation, that pastoral power developed the technology of the confession. In the 1974-1975 Lectures published as *Abnormal* (2003), Foucault briskly charts the development of penance, “the power of reintegrating those sheep that have left the flock” (2007, 153), from early Christianity up through the sixteenth century Church. According to Foucault, “there were no confessionals [in churches] before the sixteenth century” (2003, 181). In the account he gives in *Abnormal*, Foucault claims that penance “originally” involved only the state of being a penitent—someone

expelled from the church in a “public ceremony” by the bishop for whatever reason the penitent had deemed himself worthy of such a status (2003, 171). However, church authorities gradually added elements of confession as we know it today to the sacrament of penance, establishing “the priest’s control over what the faithful says: He prods him, questions him, and clarifies his confession by a technique of the examination of conscience” (Foucault 2003, 175). This evolution of penance, Foucault says, brought about a “formidable development of the pastoral, that is to say, of the technique offered to the priest for the government of souls” (2003, 177).

According to Foucault, other institutions had already begun appropriating pastoral techniques by the time Arendt marks the emergence of the social realm. The “art of conducting, directing, leading, guiding, taking in hand, and manipulating men, an art of monitoring them and urging them on step by step, an art with the function of taking charge of men collectively and individually throughout their life and at every moment of their existence” (2007, 165)—pastoral power—all escaped and proliferated outside the Church as the modern nation-state began to form. For these non-religious governing institutions, “it was no longer a question of leading people to their salvation in the next world but rather ensuring it in this world” (2003, 184). Earthly “salvation,” as Foucault defines it, resembles Arendt’s “rule by nobody,” what she describes as the “assumed one interest of society as a whole in economics” (1998, 40). According to Foucault, “in this [new] context” outside the Church, “the word ‘salvation’ takes on different meanings: health, well-being (that is, sufficient wealth, standard of living), security, protection against accidents” (2003, 184).

With the spread of pastoral techniques beyond the church, individuals' understanding of themselves changed. Interiority—that is, desires, thoughts, feelings, memories—all took on new significance. Examination of individual “souls,” and perhaps, even more importantly, self-examination, were both made standard. Pastoral power, through individualizing techniques like discipline and confession, helped spread the social into the private realm. This “intrusion” helped cause Arendt's earlier discussed “rebellion” of intimacy, an effort to protect that “which until then had needed no special protection.” However, the pastoral model of power also focused governing institutions on communities as if they were unified flocks, undermining the plurality and the shared freedom to act required in a public realm. Pastoral power, then, also helped the social consume the public realm. As the work of Nikolas Rose helps to demonstrate, psychologization has formed a penetrating and totalizing network of pastoral power.

The Psy-Sciences' Network of Pastoral Power Relations

Nikolas Rose uses Foucault's framework of “governmentality,” the spread of the techniques of the “government of souls” to many institutions, to catalogue the effects of the psy-sciences in the twentieth century. Rose describes a network of interactions the psy-sciences have helped produce. These interactions include the governing institution's assembling of knowledge about its subjects, psychologists' provision of categories for that knowledge, individuals' use of psychological vocabulary, and psychologists' professional ambitions. The “vocabularies” of the psy-sciences, which form a “language of government,” opened up new zones to the

gaze of pastoral power—capabilities, emotions, intimate relationships (Rose 1990). According to Rose, psychologization has helped create prevailing modes of self-understanding.

Psychology, in Rose's view, is best understood "as a 'Social' Science" (Rose 1990). "The birth of psychology as a distinct discipline," he claims, "its vocation and destiny, is inextricably bound to the emergence of the 'social' as a territory of our thought and our reality" (Rose 1990, 103). Though he does not give the social the monstrous quality Arendt gives it, Rose sees the social as a "territory" that renders individuals "governable" (103). According to Rose, the psy-sciences helped condition what he calls the "social territory" by "provid[ing] the terms which enabled human subjectivity to be translated into the new languages of government of schools, prisons, factories, the labour market and the economy" (106). The psy-sciences also "constituted subjectivity and intersubjectivity as themselves possible objects for rational management," making "it possible to think of achieving desired objectives—contentment, productivity, sanity, intellectual ability—through the systematic government of the psychological domain" (106). Psy-sciences provided the conceptual frameworks necessary for the extension of social norms to the internal experiences of the individual. Making these experiences knowable put power into the hands of those with the expertise to know them—those who were experts in the psy-sciences.

The Western understanding of the individual and the self have been made dependent on the advice of these "experts of the soul," according to Rose (1996b, 120). Rose argues that psychology has been a science devoted to making democratic

principles like freedom or individuality quantifiable (1996a, 116-149). This quantification has made these principles ostensibly improvable by the experts who quantify them: “one cannot [now] have freedom without experts of subjectivity, we cannot ‘know ourselves’ without some other instance providing the means to that knowledge, we cannot ‘free ourselves’ without the tools provided to us by expertise” (1996b, 121). According to Rose, individuals now rely on the expertise of others, but they also internalize the expertise and employ it on themselves. The “inculcation of self-inspection, self-problematization, and self-monitoring” (Rose 1996b, 122) brought about by the psy-sciences abolishes the intimate space of the mind: even if “experts are not present” they still “whisper constantly” to us, as Rose puts it (1996b, 122). That is, individuals come to remind *themselves* about standards of health and normalcy delineated by psy-sciences, and assess whether they are living in accordance with them. The psy-sciences, then, provide a scientific discourse that supplements rhetoric about individuality and personal freedom, as Rose points out, but in providing this they also necessarily “inculcat[e]...self-inspection, self-problematization, and self-monitoring” (1996b, 121). This fulfills the primary objective of the modern state: to instill self-control in its subjects (Rose 1996b, 117). The psychologization of individuals has formed a network of pastoral power relations, shaping each individual by instilling self-examination, but also instilling a regime of standards that are universal and conducive to the health and well-being of the community as a whole.

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With her notions of “rise of the social” and “rule by nobody,” Arendt provides a compelling framework for understanding modernity’s defining political trends. The rise of the social, according to Arendt, has removed action from politics. Foucault specifies discipline as the central strategy used by the power exercised in the social realm. Pastoral power, using discipline, confession, and other techniques, has produced modes of subjectivity preoccupied with the health of both the intimate mind and the social whole. The psy-sciences that have helped create and define the standards for both the mind and the social whole have shaped the individual’s relationship to 20th century governing institutions, as Nikolas Rose’s work helps make clear. The individual actor has been “totalized,” as Foucault puts it, shaped into a predictable, governable “social animal,” as Arendt puts it.

In the next two chapters, I consider the psy-sciences’ methods for further expanding the social realm in America, assisting in its penetration of spaces properly private and public. As I will discuss, the requirements of health and normalcy now dominate the individual collective political imagination just as they dominate the individual imagination. The expertise of the psy-sciences has come to shape both our private conduct and our public imagination.

CHAPTER TWO

The Social in Private: The Individualizing Power of Psychologization

Self-government relies, in the end, on the governing of the self.
—President George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address

In the preceding chapter, I used Foucault's concepts of discipline and pastoral power to clarify and expand Arendt's concept of the social. In the next two chapters, I apply this clarified understanding of how the social functions to demonstrate how psychologization has extended the social realm into spaces formerly reserved for the private and public. However, the next two chapters' division is not a clean one. Though separate, the public and private realms require one another to define each other. Therefore, there is inevitable overlap between what shapes private space and what shapes public space. Additionally, although psychologization has contributed to a further expansion of the social realm, Arendt makes it clear that the social realm blurred the line between private and public well before psychologization began. Modern psy-sciences were born into a robust social realm. This discussion, then, is about the *remnants* of Arendt's private and public realms. Though I divide my discussion into what once constituted the private and the public, these spaces had already lost their private or public character by the time psychologization began to reach them. I use the phrases "properly private" and "properly public" to suggest this sense of loss, but also to suggest that Arendt believed privacy and publicity were both still worth re-capturing. In this chapter, I examine psychologization's reach into that which is properly private, home life and the intimacy that developed in response to the social's earlier encroachment on privacy. Psychologization, by producing a

network of pastoral relationships, helped individualize modern Americans into predictable, governable beings, what Arendt would term “social animals.” Together, the psy-sciences and institutions of government produced an increasingly regulated, governable mode of subjectivity.

In order to establish this, I consider three important episodes in the psy-sciences’ rise to prominence in America: the development of mental testing during World War I, the development of treatment for trauma during World War II, and the explosion in sales of popular mood drugs that proliferated after World War II, the usage of which extends to the present day. In each historical moment, the relationship between the psy-sciences and the institutions of government tightened. As links between them were forged, the psy-sciences and governing institutions shaped each other into increasingly disciplinary entities. Within both, the use of pastoral techniques proliferated. The techniques they devised together spread through American institutions, refining institutions’ governing power and extending the social’s reach into properly private spaces. The psy-sciences depended on governing institutions, like the military and large corporations, for their legitimacy, while the governing institutions made use of techniques developed in conjunction with the psy-sciences in order to examine, categorize, and therefore, *produce* elements of individuality. The psy-sciences extended the gaze of the state and other institutions concerned with the “government of souls” into individuals themselves.

World War I: Standardized Testing and Personal Capability

During World War I, professional psychologists and the military worked in cooperation to develop tools for measuring intelligence as well as criteria for what “intelligence” meant. This cooperative production helped to solidify the definition of intelligence. As Rose writes, “psychology constitutes its object in the process of knowing it” (1996b, 107-108). The cooperation between psychologists and military authorities also brought the pastoral operation of the social realm to bear on personal capability, directly encroaching on what Arendt called an individual’s “innermost region” (39). The psy-sciences, together with the military, established a regimen of assessment that was disseminated from inside the military to institutions like schools, prisons, and workplaces. As Foucault makes clear in “The Subject and Power” (1982), the techniques of power, more than the aims of those who exert power, are what give individualization its defining features. So for this study, the creation of a solid concept of intelligence is less important than how that creation happened—by means of a tight intersection of governing institutions and psy-sciences—and the “technology of the test” which it created (Rose 1979, 57). From an Arendtian perspective, the proliferation of the testing of mental abilities opened the “dark” of the mind to the false “light” of the social realm. The implementation of testing for mental ability increased the importance of the “what” of the individual’s aptitude, further reducing the potential space for action by moving emphasis away from the “who” of the individual’s deeds.

Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr.’s *A Brief History of Modern Psychology* (2007) identifies psychological testing as psychologists’ most important invention of the first

half of the twentieth century. As Benjamin puts it, “mental testing virtually defined the activities of clinical psychologists in the first 50 years of their profession” (2007, 70). Later, according to another historian, testing would be “segregated, as the ‘other psychology,’ from the prestige-carrying experimental mainstream of the discipline” (Samelson 1987, 115), but beginning in World War I and for years afterward, assessments of mental capability linked psychology to the governing institutions psychologists had long claimed the ability to assist. Intelligence testing, an individualizing instrument, became a tool for the pastoral power of governing institutions.

Robert Yerkes, then president of the American Psychological Association (APA), wrote to its governing council in early 1917 that the outbreak of the Great War made it “obviously desirable that the psychologists of the country act unitedly in the interests of defense” (Yerkes 1978, 190). In the meeting that he called for, the APA formed committees to address “the psychological examination of recruits,” “the selection of men for tasks requiring special aptitude,” “psychological problems of incapacity, including those of shell shock, reeducation, etc.,” and the “problems of motivation in connection with military activities” (194-195). These committees were charged with the task of creating tools to measure these qualities, so as to help bring the “increased efficiency” Yerkes desired to the military’s recruitment process (190). The APA would have to improve upon past testing efforts in order to meet the military’s needs. Previous tests had had either little correlation with academic performance or insufficient mechanisms for assessing groups. The Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test, for instance, showed promise, but as it stood in 1917, the test was

designed so that a test administrator could only administer the test to one subject at a time. Yerkes' committee solved this problem and modified the test by inventing the multiple choice examination (Samelson 1987, 116). The newly efficient tests that resulted, the Army Alpha and Army Beta intelligence examinations, were eventually administered to nearly two million people (Benjamin 2006, 109).

Historian John Carson catalogues the set of interactions between the APA and the military that brought intelligence testing to the Army in his article, "Army Alpha, Army Brass, and the Search for Army Intelligence" (1993). Carson argues there that the relationship between the two institutions was "a constant ebb and flow, in which both the psychologists and the military oscillated between accommodating and resisting change in the process of negotiating a *modus vivendi* acceptable to both and a domain of knowledge both could deem valid and useful" (Carson 1993, 280). The military needed standardized methods to sort the massive influx of recruits who would fight in the Great War. "[W]e have to have a selective process...[;] something more scientific than the haphazard choice of men...is necessary to be devised," as Secretary of War Newton D. Baker said in 1918 (quoted in Carson 1993, 283). Yerkes' work was a direct response to this need for standardization, but it was also an effort to increase psychologists' sphere of influence. After Yerkes put the APA to work on test development, Carson explains, his primary task was convincing the military that it could benefit from implementing the tests that the APA would eventually produce (284-285).

Some military authorities were skeptical, assuming that test takers could manipulate their performances to avoid unwanted responsibilities (Carson 1993, 286).

In response, members of Yerkes' committee devised an examination that produced quantitative results. Carson explains that this exam broke from the traditional reliance on "the mediation of a trained professional," and did so in order to conform to the military's requests (287). Committee members also selected a test model they deemed to be inferior to others as it was comparatively easier to administer (287). This new model moved away from the kind of criteria previously used for exams on civilians in favor of establishing a better correlation with "the rating for mental ability given to men by their company commanders," as one committee member described it (290). The committee shaped their test models in response to the military's requests for sorting and defining strategies that would meet the military's needs.

The Army Alpha and Army Beta tests that the APA created measured soldiers' intelligence, but, according to Carson, what exactly "intelligence" meant solidified as a concept in military minds only as a *result* of the tests (1993, 304). This solidification, Carson writes, followed Foucault's description of micropower in *Discipline and Punish*—in part, that "objects can act as mediators between the realms of high ideas and those of everyday life" (Carson 1993, 308). "The story of the introduction of 'intelligence' into the American army in essence confirms [Foucault's] hypothesis," says Carson. As Carson tells it:

'Intelligence' spread throughout the military in large part because it was translated into technologies—rating cards and intelligence tests—from which most army personnel simply could not escape. In the process, both officers and enlisted men were forced to think in concrete terms about 'intelligence,' about what it might mean and what its importance might be. (1993, 308)

In World War I, then, professional psychologists cooperated with military authorities to create a "concrete" definition of intelligence. The military's needs shaped the definition of intelligence; intelligence then shaped the military's needs.

Psychologists gained new respect and a sense of the usefulness of their discipline, while the military gained a tool for sorting and defining their recruits. An important link between the psy-sciences and governing institutions had thus been forged.

The tests developed by psychologists for the military marked the “opening of a new field,” intelligence, to the “gaze” of the psy-sciences and governing institutions (Rose 1996b). Individuals in the military began to conceive of intelligence as something measurable and quantifiable, with the assistance of qualified experts. Civilians began to do the same, as evidenced by the spread of multiple choice examinations, the popularity of the “Intelligence Quotient,” (or IQ) or more recently, the measurement of capacities distinct from mental acuity with the incongruous label of intelligence—“emotional intelligence,” (Illouz 2008, 200-202) “physical intelligence,” et cetera.

The apparent success of intelligence testing developed during World War I, along with its persuasively quantified results, increased the popular authority of psychology. Benjamin points out in his *Brief History* that though:

both the Army and the World War I psychologists overestimated the quality of the job they did regarding the intellectual assessment...the perception in 1919 was that they had succeeded, and that positive image opened many doors for the application of psychology after the war, especially for those interested in applying psychology to the problems of business and the treatment of psychological disorders. (2006, 158)

Experts in the psy-sciences established themselves as knowers of mental capability and the standards to which it did or did not conform. According to Benjamin, “by the beginning of the 1920s, much of the American public seemed convinced that the science of psychology held the keys to prosperity and happiness” (183).

The transaction also expanded America’s social realm. The two-way operation of the social—turning private interests into common concerns and flattening the

intimacy of privacy—was at work here. Governing institutions gained a tool for individualizing people along quantifiable lines, carrying social norms into private life, and taking mental aptitude and making it a requisite for admission to the normality required by the social realm. The development of a solid notion of “intelligence” for pastoral purposes has had a massive impact in spaces properly private, infiltrating them with a vast array of assessments. Multiple choice examinations have become an essential tool for American governing institutions, especially schools. The proliferation of this particular technology in America has continued unabated into the present century. As journalist Valerie Strauss wrote in the *Washington Post* in 2006, “we have become a Test Nation” (Strauss, 2006). Intelligence tests and multiple choice examinations, however, measure what Foucault might call a “secret truth” (2007, 184) supposedly buried within the individual—his or her knowledge or intellectual aptitude—labeling this truth with a numerical score that shapes the individual’s understanding of his or her capabilities. This mode of self-understanding directly obstructs the faculty of action as Arendt defines it. Measuring *capability* pre-determines “what” the individual is and thus denies the individual’s ability to reveal “who” he or she is through his or her own action. One teacher explained it simply: “The child who can sit and answer the questions correctly is *identified* as talented” (Strauss, 2006, emphasis added).

The pastoral nature of the technique of standardized testing is clear from the reasons President Bush posits for having pushed for the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, which implemented a “national mandate for [standardized] testing” (Strauss, 2006). In a 2009 speech in Philadelphia, President Bush presents himself as a

shepherd, concerned with the entire flock of American students, but also concerned with the performance of each individual student. Reflecting back on his motivations for pushing for the standardized testing mandated by No Child Left Behind, President Bush says:

I didn't like it one bit when I'd go to schools in my state and realize that children were not learning so they could realize their God-given potential. I didn't like it because I knew the *future of our society* depended upon a good, sound education... We said such a system is unacceptable to the future of our state. And that's the spirit we brought to Washington, D.C. It's unacceptable to our country that vulnerable children *slip through the cracks*. (Bush 2009, emphasis added)

The “future of our society” and a child “slip[ping] through the cracks” are directly connected in Bush’s justification for standardized testing. No Child Left Behind is an effort to locate students who had strayed from the flock, assessing them and then, ideally, leading each stray child back into that flock, so that each together with the rest might reach the earthly “salvation,” as Foucault might say, promised by academic success. That the “totalizing” and “individualizing” aspects of pastoral power are indivisible, as Foucault pointed out, is even clearer later on in Bush’s speech. There President Bush first says the implementation of No Child Left Behind was necessary for the United States “to be a competitive nation as we head into the 21st century” (2009). Bush couples this totalizing objective with an individualizing motivation in the very next sentence, saying, “we believe that *every* child has dignity and worth” (Bush 2009, emphasis added). Standardized testing is both individualizing and totalizing, a pastoral technique that brings a social norm into private space, quantifying individuals’ capacities with the disciplinary instrument of the examination. The tests constructed “intelligence” as a *social* quality—both a national asset and a predictable, governable trait.

The technology of the test was developed by the psy-sciences in cooperation with the military during World War I, and both the psy-sciences and the military gained. This process would be repeated during World War II, leading to further increased prominence and legitimacy for the psy-sciences. It would again result in the production of a regimen for examination, a regimen that itself would produce a new social norm—emotional well-being—further evolving the American individual toward an inactive social being.

World War II: Psychotherapy and the Household

The psychological testing regimen had entrenched itself since World War I. As many as 16 million military men were assessed with psychological tests during World War II (Mensh 2003, 96), a major increase from the 2 million tested in World War I. But the second war also saw another link forged in the relationship between the psy-sciences and governing institutions. The psy-sciences helped the military use psychotherapy as a tool for improving the emotional “well-being” of its members. Though talk therapy had been an important if small part of America’s cultural fabric prior to World War II, the cooperation of therapists with the military during the war paved the way for an expansion of a standardized, legitimized psychotherapy that employed methods developed in response to the military’s needs. After the war, psychiatry would assume the role of a medical discipline, establishing standards for accreditation and new programs for training, finally dispelling the “prewar image of psychiatry as a backwater discipline” (Menninger and Nemiah 2000, 73). World War II thus brought additional legitimacy and popularity to psychotherapy, turning the

therapist into a sought-after expert on emotional well-being. Due to developments in World War II, psychotherapy and its confessional procedures were disseminated to individuals considered “normal.” The dissemination of psychotherapy to a wider population further expanded the individualizing power of the social.

The generally accepted account of psychotherapy’s increased prominence during World War II portrays psychotherapists as identifying and responding effectively to the previously mysterious phenomenon of battle trauma. As a result of its success, psychiatry attained well-deserved respectability as a discipline useful for the improvement of health (see Menninger and Nemiah 2000; Mensh 2003; Benjamin 2006). Mental illness was finally recognized as a public health issue, the number of psychotherapists in America began its remarkable climb, and the professional and academic accreditation of psychologists and psychiatrists took on its present shape. This, anyway, is how the sequence of events tends to be presented.

Ludy Benjamin (2006), for instance, succinctly connects the performance of World War II therapists to psychotherapy’s expansion: “They [psychiatrists] had shown they could do the job and the government was eager to fill its needs as soon as possible. The APA established an accreditation program and in 1946 began evaluating doctoral programs in clinical psychology” (2006, 163). Benjamin summarizes the results of psychiatrists’ job-well-done and the ensuing expansion of their ranks:

The big change of course was that psychologists had been around psychotherapy in a variety of settings such as state hospitals and child guidance clinics, and they had been using psychotherapy in university counseling centers since the 1920s. But the door was now open wide, thanks to the military, and psychologists were quick to join the ranks of the treatment givers. (164)

“Thanks to the military,” psychotherapy expanded out from the physical bounds of confining institutions, eventually spreading to the everyday interactions of individuals considered normal.

Historian Hans Pols corroborates the historical consensus that locates the World War II years as the period when American therapy solidified its public authority. However, in “War Neurosis: Adjustment Problems in Veterans, and an Ill Nation: The Disciplinary Project of American Psychiatry during and after World War II” (2007), Pols complicates the common historical narrative in which the proliferation of therapy resulted solely from battlefield successes and a discovered public health need. Pols claims that the relationship between psychotherapists and the military resembled the relationship between clinical psychologists and the military in World War I, and that “the abilities of psychoanalytically inspired psychotherapy met the demands of military discipline” (2007, 78). At the start of the war, according to Pols, psychologists and therapists argued over whether the neuroses suffered by soldiers on the front lines were caused by battle experiences or were simply triggered by them. At first, those with the latter view won out. It was argued that war neuroses were indicative of an initial weakness in the victim’s constitution, a weakness that preceded the violent event (76). However, facing growing numbers of evacuated neurotic soldiers, “[m]ilitary officials...became receptive to the arguments of a small but outspoken group of psychoanalytically-oriented psychiatrists who proposed providing psychotherapeutic treatment to soldiers suffering from war neuroses close to the front lines” (77). On-site treatment gradually replaced evacuation. Pols writes that “although the success of psychotherapeutic treatment near the front lines had

been greatly overstated, its perceived success was tremendous, boosting the confidence of psychiatrists in their ability to treat mental disorder” (79). It took inflated statistics regarding its service of a governing institution, but psychotherapy had acquired vital credentials.

Having established their bona fides on the battlefield, therapists used them to make pastoral injunctions about the health of the ordinary person in popular press as the war came to a close. The wartime settlement of psychiatric consensus around the idea that trauma *caused* rather than *exposed* neuroses enabled therapists to apply their directives universally, to all returning soldiers regardless of their wartime behavior. No matter what a man had been like before the war, these therapists claimed, his war experiences had changed him into a “hard” character, “unfit” for normal society (Pols 2007, 84). The returning veteran would need psychotherapeutic treatment to help him fit back in to his old context, therapists like wrote in popular magazines like *Ladies’ Home Journal* (84). This treatment would come from therapists, but therapists were not content to leave their methods there. They pushed pastoral therapeutic techniques into the home as well. According to Pols, “numerous articles, pamphlets, lectures, speeches, radio talks, and sermons were devoted to the veteran problem, giving advice to friends and family of veterans on how they could assist the returnees’ readjustment” (84). The women in veterans’ lives were considered to play particularly important roles in the veterans’ full reintegration into “society,” and were encouraged to examine in detail the ““psychology”” (85) of their particular veteran. In short, veterans, imagined as a distinct group with shared traits, would continue to need psychotherapeutic treatment at home from therapists, but also from the friends and

family that made up the veterans' spheres of intimacy. Thus, the men Pols calls "the most thoroughly investigated soldiers in history" (80) returned home to find that the techniques developed on them while fighting overseas had followed them, quite literally, into their homes. The properly private space of home life had been infiltrated with the technique of assessment, inscribing social norms on the most intimate interactions, the relationships between lovers and family members. Veterans "vigorously resisted the expansion of the psychiatric domain to include normal soldiers" (Pols, 2007, 89), but according to Pols, their resistance gained little traction.

Therapeutic techniques would only lodge themselves deeper into home and family life as time went on, even when the "problem" of the returning soldier had long since been solved. A pastoral regime of interior examination came to dominate the household. The interiorities examined are one's own, but they are also those of the lovers, friends, and family members that populate private space. In Rose's words, we are "coax[ed]...to relate to ourselves as lay psychotherapists, to become amateur administrators of the human soul" (1996b, 122). According to sociologist and cultural critic Eva Illouz, the proliferation of "therapeutic discourse" in private spaces has reshaped modern "intimacy," turning it into "an increasingly cold haven" and leading to "the cooling of passion" (2008, 142). In *Saving the Modern Soul*, Illouz looks to a number of discursive productions of psychotherapy to find the sources of this development, and she analyzes several interviews with individuals who had undergone therapy in order to demonstrate it. Illouz finds that "at the same time that it has made available a rich and elaborate lexicon of inwardness and emotions, therapy has also heralded a standardization and rationalization of emotional life" (2008, 150).

This rationalization was originally produced by the interaction of psychotherapy with a governing institution, extending the reach of the social realm into home life.

Viewed from an Arendtian perspective, the confessional nature of psychotherapeutic models—the constant directive to *speak* about one’s feelings and emotions—makes them not only pastoral, but invasive and social too. According to Arendt, the rise of the social “banished” “action and speech...into the sphere of the intimate and the private” (1998, 49), which, again, belong in the public realm. However, words spoken in the private realm have the potential to shed undue light on “the things hidden from human eyes and impenetrable to human knowledge” (62-63). It was for this reason that the ancient Greeks refused to speak about certain sacred, private phenomena. In a footnote in *The Human Condition*, Arendt cites the example of “the Eleusinian Mysteries,”—“everybody could participate in them, but nobody was permitted to talk about them” (n. 63). These private, sacred initiation rites had to be “kept secret from the public realm” and its light, as they “concerned the unspeakable, and experiences beyond speech were non-political and perhaps antipolitical by definition” (n. 63). Psychotherapy and its discourse is a technique that “incites,” as Foucault would say (1982, 789), a rationalized speech about intense, intimate experiences, bringing the intimate into the cold, flattening light of the social. Therapeutic discourse and its regimen of speech forces intimate experiences into its leveling models. The properly public faculty of speech, when applied in this way to the intimate, normalizes the intimate. Psychologization, through technologies solidified by the cooperation of the psy-sciences and the military, penetrates into intimate relationships and renders them social.

Post-War America: Pharmaceutical Psychiatry and the Brain

With the popularization of mood altering psychotropic drugs, psy-sciences found their most marketable product and their most convenient tool for extending their expertise into private spaces. The growth of psychotropic drug consumption turned mood into a matter of health, creating norms of emotional status to which an individual could better conform by taking drugs prescribed by psychiatrists. With the invention of psychotropic drugs, one could begin to modify one's own interiority and engagement with the world in order to better align one's behavior with the standards established by the social. The mode of subjectivity produced by the proliferation of psychotropic drugs has evolved over the past half-century, but it was the technique of administering the drugs that helped individualize people along lines determined by large pharmaceutical companies.

From barbiturates to tranquilizers in the 1950s to anti-depressants in the 1970s, psychotropic drugs have been common in American households since the middle of the 20th century. Anti-depressants are now the most prescribed drug in America (Cohen, 2007). Out of 2.4 billion prescriptions written in 2005, "118 million were for antidepressants" (Cohen, 2007). They suddenly rose in popularity in the late 1980s with the invention and heavy marketing of Prozac (Herzberg 2003), and the rise has continued unabated. According to a 2009 study, from 1996 to 2005, "the percentage of Americans using antidepressants surged from less than 6% to more than 10%, or more than 27 million people" (Altman 2009). From 2005 to 2009, anti-depressant consumption rose another 15% (Altman 2009). The authors of the 2009

study surmise that the increasing social acceptability of drugs was one of the “most important” “factors” contributing to their increased consumption (Altman 2009).

Reflecting the widespread consensus that mental disorders can be treated by physiological therapy, the study’s authors also write that “growing public acceptance of a biological cause of depression may also have contributed to increasing antidepressant use” (Altman 2009).

In *Happy Pills in America: From Miltown to Prozac* (2009), David Herzberg traces the increasing popularity of psychotropic drugs in America and the associated understandings of mental illness this popularity propagated. From the 1950s to the present, he argues, psychotropic drugs expanded out from medicine and into the market for popular consumer goods. This process began in earnest after World War II, when “a central goal of postwar American psychiatry was to persuade other physicians to take the mental and emotional dimensions of health seriously” (Herzberg 2009, 34). The successful 1950 synthesizing of meprobamate, one of the first “tranquilizer” drugs, was a watershed moment in this effort. Treating mental maladies with somatic therapies, like electroshock therapy, helped concretize mental illness. Doing so with some measure of success did even more—if a pill could reduce symptoms of anxiety, then anxiety could be said to have definite contours and even a location of origin. Put on the market in 1955 with the name “Miltown,” meprobamate was considered to be both effective and free of major side effects. By 1957, according to an article by Tony Dokoupil, the tranquilizer had been prescribed 37 million times (2009). It was the first blockbuster mood drug.

In Dokoupil's article, historian Andrea Tone claims that Miltown's success was due to patient demand. According to Tone, "people learned about tranquilizers not from the direct-to-consumer ads we have now—in fact, such ads were illegal for prescription drugs—but from friends, neighbors, relatives, doctors, television shows and Hollywood tabloids" (Dokoupil 2009). However, Herzberg argues that the producers of Miltown and imitator drugs—like Equanil and Librium—used several indirect but concerted tactics to get their messages directly to consumers. They made public relations experts easily accessible to reporters, placed ads in magazines meant for doctor's office waiting rooms, and "made sure that gossip columnists wrote about the new fad" of Hollywood tranquilizer use, among other strategies (Herzberg 2009, 41-42). These methods, with advertisements "designed to escape professional medical circles and circulate in popular media," were innovations, according to Herzberg, and their effects were profound (2009, 41). As he puts it, "these campaigns incited Americans to think of themselves as consumers in a new commercial bazaar for the psyche" (Herzberg 2009, 41-42). Herzberg's account shows that the discourse produced by the psy-sciences and pharmaceutical companies, a battery of indirect advertisements, helped foster demand for psychotropic drugs, by establishing norms and a opening a route for getting to those norms.

Philip Cushman verifies Herzberg's connection of psychotropic drugs' success to the strategies undertaken by the companies selling them. Advertising and psychotherapy, both of which expanded after World War II, together became the two fields devoted to "filling and healing" what Cushman calls "the empty self" (1990, 600). In Cushman's view, as expressed in "Why the Self is Empty: Toward a

Historically Situated Psychology” (1990), “there is no universal, transhistorical self, only local selves; no universal theory about the self, only local theories” (1990, 599). America’s predominant mode of selfhood, then, was shaken by the technologically unprecedented violations of moral standards, from Dresden to Auschwitz to Hiroshima. Combined with rapid industrialization, modernization, social stresses, and reassessments of earlier scientific claims, the horrors of World War II contributed to an “emptying” of the American self, which according to Cushman means:

that our terrain has shaped a self that experiences a significant absence of community, tradition, and shared meaning. [The empty self] experiences these social absences and their consequences ‘interiorly’ as a lack of personal conviction and worth, and it embodies the absences as a chronic, undifferentiated emotional hunger. The post-World War II self thus yearns to acquire and consume as an unconscious way of compensating for what has been lost. (1990, 600)

Cushman uses the word “social” in a very different sense than Arendt does, using it simply to denote that which is shared by a community. Nevertheless, he identifies an important element of the Arendtian social realm in America. The loss of sources of “shared meaning” has indeed provoked a search for new sources, and the regimes of truth provided by the psy-sciences and advertising helped provide a substitute for lost sources of certainty. However, as Cushman points out, they also actively work to reinforce the sense of emptiness that motivated the search in the first place by turning the individual’s critical eye back inside himself, encouraging him to locate the source of the emptiness there (1990, 603). So, while postwar individuals did indeed seek out psychotropic drugs for their own purposes, these purposes were conditioned by the social realm.

The interaction between pharmaceutical industry claims and individual emotional stresses was a complex one, a product and producer of modes of

individuality. In Herzberg's words, "there can be little doubt that evangelists for both Freud and Milton shaped many Americans' understandings of their own problems, but ordinary people actively used the information they received to pursue their own ideas of self-fulfillment" (2009, 44). "Their own ideas of self-fulfillment" were also shaped by therapeutic discourse and pharmaceutical advertisements. The dominant strategies for "self-fulfillment" changed over time, but pharmaceutical companies continued to supply drugs that fit with the changing strategies. In the 1960s and early 1970s, tranquilizers like Valium became America's major fad drug, a staple for many housewives coping with anxiety. Its advertisers promised a release from tensions, especially those associated with domestic duties (Herzberg 2009, 122).

Feminists contested the legitimacy of Valium, arguing that it reinforced sexual inequality (Herzberg 2009, 139). This backlash against Valium helped set the terms for anti-depressants like Prozac that began flooding the market in the late 1980s. Prozac's advertisers promised increased activity and autonomy, rather than increased calm (Herzberg 2009, 150). The feminist challenge to Valium's reinforcement of the passive housewife resisted one model of self-fulfillment, and the pharmaceutical industry responded by creating and marketing a new model with Prozac. Peter Kramer, a prominent Prozac advocate, even referred to Prozac as a "feminist drug" (quoted in Herzberg 2009, 151). Nevertheless, what remained intact through changing cultural expectations for "self-fulfillment" was the reliance on psychotropic drugs to help meet the demands of those expectations. The ends of the pastoral power relationship changed, but the technology of psychotropic drugs as consumer goods remained in place.

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Psy-sciences rose to prominence in the 20th century by cooperating with governing institutions and by meeting the needs of individuals unsettled by the changing demands of the social realm. In so doing, the psy-sciences and governing institutions individualized Americans, establishing regimes of examination and assessment that made their way into intimate relationships and home life. Psychologization extended the reach of the social deeper into private spaces, via mental testing, psychotherapy, and psychotropic drugs.

As Foucault demonstrated, pastoral power's individualizing aspects cannot be separated from its totalizing aspects. In the following chapter, then, I examine psychologization's role in totalizing Americans, expanding Arendt's "social" into properly public spaces.

CHAPTER THREE

The Social in Public: The Totalizing Power of Psychologization

We'll restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders...
—President Barack Obama, 2009 Inaugural Address

In “On Violence,” Arendt argues that, in the present day:

the specific distinction between man and beast is now, strictly speaking, no longer reason (the *lumen naturale* of the human animal) but science, the knowledge of these standards and the techniques for applying them. According to this view, man acts irrationally and like a beast if he refuses to listen to the scientists or is ignorant of their latest findings. (Arendt 1972, 159-160).

What is it that prominent scientists within the psy-sciences have to say about their discipline’s vocation?

In this chapter, I discuss psychologization’s effects on the potential for a public realm. I argue that psychologization has helped further displace the public since Arendt wrote *The Human Condition*, cementing the conception of politics as a craft and of political community as a social organism. In an attempt to give a broad view of this trend, I examine examples from three strands of American psy-sciences’ development—psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and explicitly “atheoretical” objectivity. First, I consider Sigmund Freud’s argument for civilizational therapy in his 1930 *Civilization and Its Discontents*. I then look to two of behaviorism’s major texts, John B. Watson’s 1913 “Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It” and B. F. Skinner’s 1948 *Walden Two*. In these, the authors urge the application of their findings to the government of individuals and the crafting of a social whole. Finally, I examine two popular media articles that use the discourse of the psy-sciences to argue for social

crafting. These articles are indicative of the contemporary trend toward a “modest” objectivity. By examining these texts, I show that, even as the prevailing styles of doing psychology have changed, psychologization has been consistently wrapped up with the tradition of imagining a political community as a single social organism. The authors of these texts tie this conceptual move to the improvement of individuals’ emotional well-being.

I have selected the first group of texts because they are personal statements from authors whose work heavily influenced the psy-sciences, in which those authors put forward their views about their disciplines’ “vocation and destiny,” in Rose’s terms (1990, 103). These texts apply the expertise of the psy-sciences to the common—what was once public life. The contemporary op-eds do the same, but as I will discuss, they go about the task of engineering the common as a social whole by masking their situated perspectives with the language of scientific necessity. Each of these texts also shapes or coincides with an important moment in the development of psychologization. Freud’s work was the source most drawn upon by the post-World War II boom in psychiatry, and *Civilization and Its Discontents* continues to exert influence over the popular imagination. John B. Watson is regarded as the founder of behaviorism, which Watson called a “purely American production” (quoted in Mandler 2007, 100) and his “Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It” concisely summarizes what separates it from other psychological schools. B. F. Skinner’s authorial output consistently sparked major controversies among his colleagues and the general public. A fixture at Harvard University, Skinner was one of the most famous scientists of the twentieth century, once even gracing the cover of Time

Magazine. Skinner's *Walden Two*, which somewhat clumsily straddles the boundary between fiction and polemical tract, has sold nearly three million copies (Wiener 1996, 105). The contemporary op-eds I included here reflect the fact that, as Rose puts it, "the languages and techniques of psychology... are increasingly... disseminated by the mass media" (1990, 115).

The Psychoanalytical Craftsman: Freud's Civilizational Therapy

In his 1930 *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud applies his psychoanalytic expertise to the study of civilization as a whole. He envisions a "civilization" that resembles Arendt's social—it is uniform, it can be administrated, and it can be treated. In a pastoral strategy that is both totalizing and individualizing, Freud recommends psychoanalytic treatment for civilization in order to loosen what he imagines as its grip on individuals' drives.

According to Freud, civilization has grown "'neurotic' under the influence of cultural strivings," strivings produced by the cultural super-ego (2002, 104). The constraints imposed by civilization on the individual resemble constraints imposed by the mind's super-ego on the desires of its id. Civilization's structure parallels that of the psyche. Freud theorizes that the "cultural super-ego," which is "concerned with the mutual relations of human beings" (102), conducts civilization and has made it increasingly repressive (104). The cultural super-ego, according to Freud, makes its "demands" known through ethics (104). In fact, for Freud, ethics are nothing *but* the demands of a cultural super-ego, and those who crafted them were nothing more than failed therapists: "Ethics is thus to be viewed as an attempt at therapy, an endeavor to

achieve, through a precept of the super-ego, what has not so far been achievable through other cultural activities” (105). While ethics was an *attempt* at therapy, according to Freud, only the frameworks provided by psychoanalysis could offer *successful* therapy to civilization as a whole.

Freud presents a loose template for how such a process might work. An “analytic dissection of these neuroses,” civilization’s neuroses, should be undertaken (Freud 2002, 104). Like the analysis of the individual psyche, this analysis of civilization would attempt to locate the buried causes of its disorder, which would then provide guidelines “for therapy” (2002, 104). Freud makes it clear that the technique used to provide therapy for individuals would be paralleled by this attempt at civilizational therapy:

For therapeutic purposes we are therefore often obliged to oppose the super-ego and attempt to lower its demands. We can make quite similar objections to the ethical demands of the cultural super-ego... It assumes that it is psychologically possible for the human ego to do whatever is required of it, that the ego has absolute control over the id. This is an error... control of the id cannot be increased beyond certain limits. To demand more is to provoke the individual to rebellion or neurosis, or to make him unhappy. (2002, 103)

Like the individual psyche, civilization should be assessed and then treated with psychoanalytic methods. Freud here imagines civilization as a single entity, a living organism, one that he believes he can lead to better conditions by applying his expertise.

Freud presents “happiness” as the ultimate goal of his therapy, both for the individual and civilization. He holds it up as an assumed shared goal in the above critique of “the ethical demands of the cultural super-ego,” where he argues that those

demands make people “unhappy.” Earlier in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud argues that no one can accurately assess whether previous periods in history were better than the present one, purely because “it is very hard to form a judgement as to whether and to what extent people of an earlier age felt happier” (2002, 33). As Freud sees it, the challenges of living with others, of plurality, offer only two possible strategies for attaining happiness—isolation or the application of scientific findings to those challenges:

Deliberate isolation, keeping others at arm's length, affords the most obvious protection against any suffering arising from interpersonal relations. One sees that the happiness that can be attained in this way is the happiness that comes from peace and quiet. Against the dreaded external world one can defend oneself only by somehow turning away from it, if one wants to solve the problem unaided. There is of course another, better path: as a member of the human community one can go on the attack against nature with the help of applied science, and subject her to human will. (2002, 18)

For Freud, the ultimate end of human life is happiness—a subjective experience of emotional well-being. The “interpersonal relations” and “nature” that constitute the “external world” work to repress the individual’s ability to attain happiness. So, just as the natural sciences offer a strategy for subjugating the “natural world” to the human drive for happiness, Freud offers his psychoanalytic therapy up as a strategy for “go[ing] on the attack” against “interpersonal relations.”

Understood from an Arendtian perspective, Freud’s view of happiness and its required civilizational therapy assists the rise of the social. According to Arendt, the notion of happiness common to the modern period, the kind of happiness that Freud articulates, was wholly foreign to antiquity. Some ancient philosophical schools, like

Epicureanism, had argued for pleasure-seeking as humanity's ultimate end. However, only the spread of Christianity and its promises of eternal life would put "the principle of *life itself*," that is, biological life, at the center of what is now called "happiness" (Arendt 1998, 311, emphasis added). In Arendt's narrative, though Christianity declined, biological life retained its lofty position as humanity's unassailable "supreme standard" (311). In Arendt's view, the fact that there is no legitimate role accorded to suicide anywhere in the "modern egoism...(called happiness)" proves that the "ruthless search for pleasure" that marks hedonism is not what constitutes modern happiness (311). For a system that valued pleasure above all, ending a life completely devoid of pleasure would be a permissible, albeit extreme, option. At its heart, then, the happiness we know today concerns itself with preserving biological life, above all other pleasures and all other interests. This elevation of biological life affects both the individual and humanity as a collective whole: "The interests of the individual as well as the interests of mankind are always equated with individual life or the life of the species as though it were a matter of course that life is the highest good" (1998, 311-312). Arendt argues that this assumption has caused "an extraordinarily striking...loss of human experience," degrading "all human activities" and goals to the level of biological life "functions" (321-322). It has also helped solidify the dominance of the social realm, directing all activities toward a contribution to the wider social *life* of the species.

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud applies his notion of happiness to the human species in the same way he applies it to the individual. The species stands to gain from social changes enacted on an individual level, like reducing the use of

the intoxicants that have caused a “futile loss of large amounts of energy that might have been used to improve the lot of *mankind*” (Freud 2002, 19, emphasis added). In short, like Foucault’s shepherd, Freud seeks to analyze and treat civilization, “but he can only really direct it insofar as not a single sheep escapes him” (Foucault 2007, 128). Conversely, therapy administered to a unified social whole, as if it were a living organism, affects the happiness of each individual. Freud cannot separate the emotional well-being of the individual from the make-up of civilization, and his recommendations address both together. Since social mores, in Freud’s view, inhibit individual happiness, then changing civilization by therapeutic means as if it were an individual itself is not so much an extension of psychoanalysis’ purview as its necessary prerequisite. Only when the “demands” of the “cultural super-ego” are reduced will psychoanalysis provide its maximum benefits, and further, only psychoanalysis can adequately provide them. All other sources of guidance are insufficient to the task, according to Freud: “There is only one thing that I know for certain,” he wrote, “the value judgments of human beings are undoubtedly guided by their desire for happiness and thus amount to an attempt to back up their illusions with arguments” (2002, 105). Freud endows himself and his discipline with the authority to shape a community into a society organized around a single interest, with all its members deferring to experts for guidance toward the earthly salvation promised by happiness.

The Behavioral Craftsman: Watson's Behavior and Skinner's Utopia

John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner, two of the most prominent behavioral psychologists in history, seek, in their work, to provide a set of tools for those who would shape society. For the two psychologists, behaviorism enables the crafting of both individuals and groups. Watson places the utility of behaviorism at the center of “Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It” (1913). B. F. Skinner takes Watson’s contribution a step further, imagining a utopian community run by behaviorist principles in his novel, *Walden Two*. Skinner presents this imagined community just as Freud presents his imagined civilizational therapy—as a prerequisite for the full realization of his discipline’s ability, in Freud’s earlier mentioned phrasing, to “improve the lot of mankind” (1930 [2002], 19). With these moves, Watson and Skinner enrich the model of politics as a craft and a pastorate, conceiving of common life as something that can and should be supervised and governed down to the smallest behavior.

Behaviorists challenged psychology’s focus on inner life. According to behaviorists in the early twentieth century, the popular techniques practiced by their contemporaries, like introspection, were misguided and hopelessly subjective. John B. Watson’s 1913 “Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It” concisely introduces the more scientific alternative his young movement offered. To be respected as a natural science, Watson argues in the article, psychology would have to have the same quantitative rigor as other natural sciences. Therefore, as Watson sees it, psychology should study only measurable responses to stimuli—movements, motions, evidence of learning, problem solving ability, and so on. “Speculative questions concerning the

elements of mind, the nature of conscious content” (Watson 1913)—Watson dismisses them all from among psychology’s proper objects of study, deeming them unmeasurable. However, this does not limit the psychologist’s purview. On the contrary, for Watson, every single human faculty should be considered a ‘behavior’: “imagination, judgment, reasoning, and conception” are nothing more than some of behavior’s “more complex forms” (1913) for which measurement tools have yet to be invented. It would merely take more time and effort to discern all the physical stimuli to which these complex forms of behavior respond. Watson connects more obvious “behaviors” to other human activities in this way:

I found the animals doing certain things: some of the acts seemed to work peculiarly well in such an environment, while others seemed to be unsuited to their type of life... Had I been called upon to examine the natives of some of the Australian tribes, I should have gone about my task in the same way. I should have found the problem more difficult: the types of responses called forth by physical stimuli would have been more varied, and the number of effective stimuli larger... If I had been called upon to work out the psychology of the educated European, my problem would have required several lifetimes. (1913)

But it could, in theory, be done. For Watson, humans are simply complex animals and can be studied as non-human animals are studied. Above all, Watson seeks to make his animal experiments *useful* to the builders of society in order that they might better shape it and its people. As Watson writes, “the educator, the physician, the jurist and the business man could utilize our data in a practical way” (1913). For Watson, the goal of assembling this data is unmistakably government: “In the main, my desire in all such work is to gain an accurate knowledge of adjustments and the stimuli calling them forth. My final reason for this is to learn general and particular methods by which I may control behavior.” Watson adds the disclaimer,

“We leave it to the individual as to whether the results of our tests shall be applied or not” (1913). Nevertheless, it is clearly his hope that his results would be found useful by key agents of government—“the educator, the physician, the jurist and the business man” (Watson 1913). Watson explicitly seeks to use his science to give tools to society’s craftsmen. By imagining individuals as behaving animals, Watson provides a behavior-oriented mode of subjectivity to governing institutions. With his findings, Watson provides tools for producing that mode of subjectivity.

In 1948, another canonical behaviorist, B. F. Skinner, followed Watson’s development of an expertise of control through to its logical conclusion and placed the behaviorist himself in the role of social craftsman. In his 1948 novel *Walden Two*, Skinner envisions a utopian community, “Walden Two,” governed by behaviorist principles. Two academics, Burriss and Castle, along with two former soldiers and the soldiers’ girlfriends, travel to and explore the thriving community in the American countryside. Joe Frazier, who founded and now helps operate the community, greets the touring party, and from greeting to goodbye, Frazier’s words dominate the text of Skinner’s novel. Frazier takes the group through the community over a several day period, gradually revealing increasingly intimate aspects of community life and the positive changes the behaviorist administration has had on them. In the community, each activity—from carrying tea down cafeteria stairs to public policy to raising children—is directed with methods determined by experiments on the community members.

Frazier and the Walden Two community seek to turn government into a “science” executed exclusively by behavioral specialists (Skinner 1962, 194). Six

Planners, with a team of Managers under them, control Walden Two's social policies and set the community's behavioral Code. They are chosen, rather than elected, based on their expertise. Aside from these experts, the members of Walden Two do not participate in community politics. "An efficient state culture must be discovered by experimentation," Frazier says (Skinner 1962, 195), and only those with interest and know-how can perform that experimentation. Frazier takes pains to point out that the community treats political administration as just one of the many practices that keep the community running smoothly. As Frazier argues, no one activity, including politics, captures the interest of the entire community. Thus, to encourage everyone to involve themselves in any given facet of community life would be not just unfair, but absurd (Skinner 1962, 43). As Frazier puts it, "to suggest that everyone should take an interest [in politics] would seem as fantastic as to suggest that everyone should become familiar with our Diesel engines" (Skinner 1962, 270). So, rather than a public realm in which to engage in politics, Walden Two has a system of behavioral engineering. In other words, Walden Two is a perfectly developed *society* with no need for private or public.

Burris and Castle, the professors that visit Walden Two, question Frazier on the political setup of his community and challenge Frazier to justify its system of government. In response, Frazier argues that attaining happiness, the ultimate good, is:

'not a problem of government and politics at all. That's the first plank in the Walden Two platform. You can't make progress toward the Good Life by political action! Not under *any* current form of government! You must operate upon another level entirely. What you need is a sort of Nonpolitical Action Committee: keep out of politics and

away from government except for practical and temporary purposes. It's not the place for men of good will or vision.' (Skinner 1962, 193-194)

In order to reach the goal of providing happiness and self-fulfillment for the members of the Walden Two community, its founders made politics a specialized trade and government nothing more than administration. The scientific operation of government in Walden Two ensures that the findings of the behavioral specialists, which provide foolproof routes to happiness, are fully implemented:

'The one fact that I would cry from every housetop is this: the Good Life is waiting for us--here and now!...It doesn't depend on a change in government or on the machinations of world politics. It doesn't wait upon an improvement in human nature. At this point we have the necessary techniques, both material and psychological, to create a full and satisfying life for everyone.' (Skinner 1962, 194)

The contentious nature of democratic politics would threaten the implementation of those techniques. Walden Two community members prioritize policy over politics in their interaction with the wider world, too. The community's "Political Manager" makes a "Walden Ticket" of recommended candidates in elections for the outside town and county. Community members all vote that ticket in order to exert maximum control over the policies enacted by the local governments in the area around Walden Two. "Why should our members take the time—and it does take time—to inform themselves on so complex a matter [as who to vote for]?" asks Frazier. "But free suffrage—" Castle, the hapless philosophy professor interjects. "Free fiddlesticks!" said Frazier. "We all know what we want so far as the local government is concerned, and we know how to get it--by voting the Walden Ticket... We've cleaned up the township and are in a fair way to cleaning up the county" (Skinner 1962, 197).

The Walden Two community further collapses the public realm with another related strategy—forbidding personal achievements. This means that not only are there no athletic tournaments, there is absolutely no social expectation of gratitude for any deed one performs—everything one does and sees others do is understood to be directed toward sustaining the health of the community. As Frazier explains, “a triumph over another man is never a laudable act... We could not see how the whole group could gain from individual glory” (1962, 169). “The Good Life,” as Frazier sees it, may include “a chance to exercise talents and abilities” (160), but recognition does not follow from this exercise. There is no room for excellence in Walden Two, and there is no public realm through which deeds and words could reverberate and accrue meaning.

It is no coincidence that Frazier refers to the therapists who “help” community members live by its Code as its “priests” (Skinner 1962, 199). In its simultaneous concern with the social whole and over each aspect of the individual’s life, the behavioral engineering employed at Walden Two techniques is thoroughly pastoral. Its administrators work to foster the earthly “salvation” of happiness in as many people as possible, governing each aspect of daily life in order to do so. The techniques they use are explicitly made separate from classical, sovereign power exertions. As Frazier puts it succinctly, “You can't *force* a man to be happy” (Skinner 1962, 194). Rather, Frazier and the other administrators use Skinner’s positive reinforcement to shape each individual and address each community need. The positive incentive structure developed by the behaviorist administrators of Walden

Two resembles Foucault's description of power: "it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult" (Foucault 1980, 789).

Skinner, reflecting back on *Walden Two* years after it was published, said that "I did not know until I had finished the book that I was both Burriss and Frazier" (quoted in Baars 2003, 10). Despite their differing personality traits, by the end of the novel both characters are in agreement—Walden Two is the ideal community, the best the world had produced so far. On this point, then, Skinner was not conflicted—Frazier's political vision was very much his own. As *Walden Two's* publishers promoted it, the novel was "based...on good, solid psychological and economic theories applied to present-day American life. It is the kind of dream that can be translated into reality" (cited in Tinker 1949, 252). In Skinner's "dream," there was no public debate, no exchange of free opinions, no action; everyone worked together for the benefit of individual happiness and the smooth functioning of the society, all as directed by experts in behavioral technology.

As Freud does in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Skinner argues in *Walden Two* that to realize the "good life" for as many people as possible, communities ought to be shaped by a specialized psychological expertise. In order to fully realize the potential benefits of Skinner's scientific findings, society would have to be treated as Skinner sees fit. Thus, not only does behaviorism "aim to reduce man as a whole, in all his activities, to the level of a conditioned and behaving animal," as Arendt put it when discussing the "behavioral sciences," (1998, 45) it also provides a conceptual model of a governable *society*. These two contributions work together pastorally—behaviorism concerns itself with the social whole and with the everyday activities of

each individual. Behaviorism is concerned with the management of the most minute behaviors of individuals, but it is just as effective in its totalization of political community into a single, constructible whole.

The Atheoretical Craftsman: Modest Social Engineering

Behaviorism eventually lost its position at the cutting edge of the psy-sciences to other experimental movements like cognitive psychology and biological psychiatry. A retrospective look at *Walden Two* from the *American Journal of Psychology* in 1977 marked the shift: “As psychologists noting the decline of behaviorism and the emergence of cognitive psychologies,” the reviewer wrote, “we do not all share [Skinner’s] confidence in behavioral technology” (Hilgard 1977, 328). Experts in the psy-sciences, still striving to resemble experts in the natural sciences, adopted what feminist theorist Donna Haraway calls a “modest witness” posture. This, at least, is how Bradley Lewis, a social theorist trained in medicine and psychiatry, perceives the recent course of psychiatry’s history (Lewis 2006, 5). In presentations of science, the modest witness, according to Haraway, uses narratives of objectivity to situate himself above culture and history, creating an aura of “magical power” by presenting impressive credentials and a disinterested methodology (Haraway 1997, quoted in Lewis 2006, 10). Lewis applies Haraway’s model to contemporary psychiatry: “By adamantly denying the theory-laden and culturally contextual dimensions of psychiatric knowledge, scientific psychiatry denies being situated in a culture... [T]he personal interests and social biases of psychiatric researchers drop out of the picture” (Lewis 2006, 10). So, the psy-science expert with

explicit theories about society became unfashionable. The turn to a “modest witness” posture altered what Foucault called a “system of differentiation” (1982, 792)—the set of qualities which are believed to divide experts from non-experts. The totalizing power of psychologization dispersed into more subtle expressions, moving into secondary works and adopting new language. Nevertheless, experts in the psy-sciences continued to take a pastoral approach to the application of their expertise, conceiving of a social organism in place of a public realm of actors in order to administer treatment that would ostensibly benefit each member of the community. In order to display the change in strategy and the continuity in objective, I examine two opinion pieces in popular media. In both articles, the authors marshal the work of experts in the psy-sciences as “freestanding Truth” (Lewis 10) and use it as value-neutral evidence for their projects of crafting the social whole.

In an op-ed piece from the January 1, 2011 *New York Times*, “Equality: A True Soul Food,” Nicholas D. Kristof relays the argument of a book, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, and writes of the “growing evidence” it presents—“that the toll of our stunning inequality is not just economic but also is a melancholy of the soul.” The column follows a familiar format, opening by linking a truth expressed in literature to the scientific evidence that has come to support it. John Steinbeck’s “insight” “that ‘a sad soul can kill you quicker, far quicker, than a germ’” has “now” been “confirmed by epidemiological studies,” Kristof writes (2011). He then differentiates the producers of this scientific knowledge from his readers, drawing attention to the intimidating gulf of authority separating them: *The Spirit Level* is an “important book,” the scientists who wrote it

are “distinguished,” and the evidence for their claims could fill “mountains” (Kristof 2011). The key piece of evidence supporting the claim is the way “other primates” have been found to deal with social inequality. Unidentified “scientists” have proved that inequality inflicts physical damage on “low-status monkeys” (Kristof 2011). “As with monkeys,” Kristof writes, “so with humans” (2011).

Kristof makes a second transposition, another familiar one, to establish the differentiation between the knower and the reader. He equates diseases of the individual body to diseases of the imagined social organism: “The result [of inequality] is *physical* ailments like heart disease, and *social* ailments like violent crime, mutual distrust, self-destructive behaviors and persistent poverty” (Kristof 2011, emphasis added). Only the doctor’s knowledge about heart disease enables the doctor to prescribe practices for a healthier body; only the epidemiologist’s knowledge, knowledge expressed in psychological vocabulary, enables the epidemiologist and the author who uses his work to make claims about the health of “our nation’s soul” (Kristof 2011). Scientific expertise cloaks Kristof’s opinion in a shroud of objectivity. Kristof presents scientific findings not as justification for his belief, but as the original cause of that belief. *The Spirit Level* proves inequality psychologically damages the individual and the social whole, and thus Kristof believes federal policy should reduce social inequality. Kristof presents the progression in this way, at least.

A similar pattern emerges in “Rudeness is a Neurotoxin,” a Huffington Post article which was published to the site on January 5th of the same year. The conspicuously titled *Dr. Douglas Fields* (pictured in a lab coat) wants to see a

network of “polite and formalized behaviors,” à la 1950s America as presented in *Leave it to Beaver*, reinstated in present-day American “society” (2011). He begins his piece this way: “Americans are rude. I say this not to preach, which is neither my right nor my intention, but as a scientist, a developmental neuroscientist. My concern about American rudeness relates to my scientific research and knowledge about the development of the human brain” (Fields 2011). Fields here positions himself as a modest witness. He does not, he claims, see our current “disrespectful, stressful social environment,” as morally or ideologically objectionable, rather, he is simply concerned, scientifically, with it being “a neurotoxin for the brain and psyche” (Fields 2011). Thus, as with Kristof, a scientific finding prompted Fields’ desire for social reform. His expertise in neurobiology alone qualifies him to make recommendations for therapy to be administered to the social whole.

These two pieces make use of neuroscience and laboratory experiments on animals, respectively—evidence removed from the ordinary citizen’s experience. These proofs of psychological truths have become mainstays of the discourses of the psy-sciences and their system of differentiation over the past half-century.⁷ Scientific testing on animals has produced well-known developments in human medicine, lending such evidence authority from past success. Further, the layman has a more difficult time comparing this evidence to his own experience than data collected on humans. In response to popular scientific discourse’s reliance on animal experiments

⁷ An example chosen at random: In a February 11th, 2011 Time Magazine article published in the wake of the Egyptian revolution, “What Was Mubarak Thinking? Inside the Mind of a Dictator” has a psychologist explaining Mubarak’s slow departure to the behavior of an aggressive dog. “Let that then capture the long-incoming departure of Hosni Mubarak,” the journalist writes, “dictator, oppressor, very bad dog.”

to study elements of human lives, Arendt pointed out in “On Violence” that “in order to learn that overcrowding results in irritation and aggressiveness, we hardly needed to experiment with rats. One day in the slums of any big city would have sufficed” (1972, 156). Arendt’s point is intuitively satisfying, but the psy-sciences’ attachment to animal evidence runs deep. It is a key element in their system of differentiation, enabling them to make claims that cement their pastoral role as a guide and therapist for an imagined social organism.

Neuroscience, which Fields uses in his plea for politeness, has become an even more important device for justifying established psychological truth and creating new truth. According to Nikolas Rose, the marriage of neuroscience and the psy-sciences has helped create contemporary psy-sciences’ ascendant model of the person, the “neurochemical self.” The idea that “we can see ‘mind’ in the activities of the living brain” (Rose 2007, 196) has given rise to a “way of thinking...and a growing proportion of psychiatrists find it difficult to think otherwise. In this way of thinking, all explanations of mental pathology must ‘pass through’ the brain and its neurochemistry” (Rose 2007, 220). Neuroscience, with its easily reproducible images and its reductionist explanations, has a strong influence on American media and its consumers. It instantly lends a level of credibility to an argument. This has even been “proven” experimentally: in one experiment researchers presented explanations of psychological phenomena to experts and non-experts in neuroscience. Non-experts took the ‘bad explanations’—logically “bad” because they did not explain a phenomenon, only described it—to be considerably more satisfying when “logically irrelevant” but “seductive” neuroscientific details were attached to the same

explanations (Weisberg et al., 2008, 475). In the title of their report, the researchers refer to the power of “neuroscience explanations” as a “seductive allure” (Weisberg et al., 2008, 470). It seems clear that its deployment is particularly useful for persuasive purposes.

Thus, a few unique trends mark the psy-sciences’ contemporary “system of differentiation,” at least as on display in these texts: the prioritization of objectivity, the claim of verifiability by the scientific method, the adoption of medical discourse, and the use of evidence from “harder” sciences like animal behavior and neuroscience. However, though the psy-sciences have turned to establishing their experts as “modest witnesses,” though psychologization today tends to rely on this model, this turn has only further enabled its resistance to the elements of a public realm—plurality, uncertainty, and freedom.

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From psychoanalysis to behaviorism to atheoretical objectivity, what Rose called the “vocation” of the psy-sciences has consistently included the objective of crafting political communities as a social whole. This objective goes hand in hand with the need to provide for each individual’s well-being. For Freud, civilization should be treated with therapy along lines parallel to the treatment of an individual. Watson and Skinner similarly seek to shape society as they shape individuals, but they seek to employ behavioral technology to do so. In Skinner’s *Walden Two*, the impacts of the full implementation of a regime of psychological expertise are made especially clear. In the op-eds I discussed, the aim of engineering community as a

social whole is legitimized with references to the magical-seeming authority of science, which lend the authors' aims a sense of inevitability and objectivity. In all these texts, communities are conceived of as a social whole which can and should be manipulated in order to better both the whole and the individual members that make it up.

Arendt comments on these theoretical moves in *On Violence*, arguing that they contribute to the consumption of the public realm. Further, they invite the violence characteristic of the model of politics as a craft. Arendt argued that “nothing...could be more theoretically dangerous than the tradition of organic thought in political matters” (1972). For Arendt, the kind of model of society presented in the texts I discussed in this chapter was inseparable from the social realm's conversion of the common into a nationwide household:

The organic metaphors with which our entire present discussion of these matters...is permeated—the notion of a ‘sick society’...—can only promote violence in the end. Thus the debate between those who propose violent means to restore ‘law and order’ and those who propose nonviolent reforms begins to sound ominously like a discussion between two physicians who debate the relative advantages of surgical as opposed to medical treatment of their patient... Moreover, so long as we talk in nonpolitical, biological terms, the glorifiers of violence can appeal to the undeniable fact that in the household of nature destruction and creation are but two sides of the natural process... (1972, 172)

Freud, Watson, Skinner, and the seers of today's popular psy-science discourse, all seek to craft a society more conducive to their ends of “salvation” on earth—emotional well-being for as many as possible. Whether or not this crafting actually takes place is not at issue. Rather, it is the psy-scientists' strategies and conceptual frameworks—the pastoral logic of their recommendations—that do violence to the

possibility for a plural, public realm. They render such a possibility illegitimate, and, increasingly, unimaginable. The equation of human relationships with nature and the equation of the community with the individual provide conceptual tools for totalizing plural communities into a unified society, or a household that could be reshaped by architects—whether experts in the psy-sciences or politicians. As I will show in my final chapter, the effort to craft and treat political community as a social whole, together with the penetrating technologies discussed in the previous chapter, have established a system of power-knowledge that has produced an inactive, psychologized mode of citizenship in America.

CHAPTER FOUR
Psychologized Citizenship

An established practice of authority is most dangerous when it expresses the urge to treat society as a home, because its exercise then functions to repress, exclude, deny that which is discordant with the harmony pursued.

—William Connolly, *Politics and Ambiguity*

In this final chapter, I tie my discussion of psychologization’s production of self-governing individuals and a household-like social whole to an explicit model of citizenship. In order to do this, I compare selected American presidential rhetoric from the 1960s and the twenty-first century. With the trends discussed in my previous chapters brought to bear on a political phenomenon, rhetoric, the model of the “psychologized citizen” will, I hope, begin to emerge more clearly. Then, I consider possible sources for “re-activating” this model of citizenship, sources found in the effort to re-think the pastoral power network that has helped produce the model. However, I find these sources to hold little promise. As I explain, I am pessimistic about the possibility for novelty in politics as we know them today in America. The governing functions of the psy-sciences continue to penetrate deeper into properly private spaces, while the conceptual frameworks created by the psy-sciences continue to consume the vestiges of the political realm. The novelty cherished by Foucault and Arendt is everywhere blocked by the administration, categorization, and governing both thinkers loathed.

In Chapter Two, I showed that psychologization has made private life more governable, subject to penetrating, productive technologies like mental testing, talk therapy, and psychotropic drugs. These technologies carry the norms of the social

realm into private space, helping to individualize people along lines conducive to governing institutions. In Chapter Three, I demonstrated that psychologization has made properly public spaces more social, cementing the concept of a community as a social organism in need of administration and treatment. Thus, psychologization has helped produce both a governable mode of individuality and a totalized political community resembling a social organism. Two poles of individuality have run through my work so far: on one side, Arendt's actor; on the other side, Foucault's pastoral subject, docile and endlessly confessing. As it stands, though, I have yet to clearly demonstrate a shift from one to the other in the prevailing mode of American *citizenship*, considered as distinct, though not separate, from individuality. I have yet to demonstrate how the psy-sciences' expansion of the social impacts citizenship itself.

So, I turn yet again to textual analysis, this time to the analysis of speeches delivered by John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Barry Goldwater in the 1960s, and speeches delivered by George W. Bush and Barack Obama in the twenty-first century. This analysis uncovers a striking shift in the way American politicians conceive of citizenship that coincides with the central trend I have discussed: a continued "rise of the social" via pastoral techniques, resulting in a devaluation of action. While in the 1960s, political oratory was at least partly directed at political *actors*, by the 2000s, the "fellow citizens" addressed by both George W. Bush and Barack Obama were unmistakably psychologized citizens—preoccupied with an interiority established by the social realm's rule by nobody and stripped of their faculty of action. "Freedom" as a "practice," which James Tully believes to be both

Arendt's and Foucault's ideal, (1999, 162) has no place in contemporary citizenship as conceived in rhetoric. That the shift is so striking suggests that Arendt's concept of the social and Foucault's notion of pastoral power have become perhaps even more relevant to American politics in recent years than they were when the authors originally articulated them. That the change is visible from the 1960s to the 2000s makes could likely be explained by the fact that, as I see it, the psy-sciences were struggling for full legitimacy up through the immediate post-war period. While their individualizing technologies were developed prior to it, those technologies have seen their major proliferation take place in the years following it.

Nevertheless, I do not mean to suggest that an Arendtian public realm existed in 1960s America. Rather, I argue only that the social realm has rapidly *continued* its expansion since the 1960s with the aid of the psy-sciences' pastoral techniques, and, further, that changes in political rhetoric help illustrate this expansion. As James L. Nolan Jr. explains in *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End*, political rhetoric reveals the "dialogue between" "prevailing cultural values or cultural consciousness and the institutions of the modern American state" (Nolan 1998, 241). Rhetoric shapes but is also shaped by commonly held conceptual frameworks, including the model of the citizen.

Presidential Rhetoric of the 1960s: The Political Actor in Public Space

President John F. Kennedy opens space for action in his 1961 inaugural address. *Words* and *deeds* play important roles in Kennedy's schema: "we offer a special pledge—to convert our good words into good deeds... To those new States

whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word” (J. Kennedy 1961). Kennedy explicitly calls for deeds: “ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country...ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man” (1961). Kennedy also mentions *beginnings* four times. He twice calls for “both sides” of the Cold War divide to “begin anew the quest for peace” (J. Kennedy 1961). His inauguration itself “symboliz[es] an end, as well as a beginning,” and what it begins “will not be finished...even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet” (J. Kennedy 1961). Despite this, he urges his fellow citizens and America’s fellow nations: “let us begin” (J. Kennedy 1961). The ability to act, and thus to begin, to send currents out into the web of human relationships, is central to the call Kennedy sent out to America and the world.

As with Arendt’s action, though, the words, deeds, and beginnings in Kennedy’s inaugural address have unpredictable outcomes. Kennedy chooses to call the tasks before him and his fellow citizens “endeavors” and “efforts,” rather than “goals” or “aims,” or even as things to “achieve” or “accomplish.” Kennedy’s use of “endeavor” and “effort” acknowledges of the uncertainty inherent to and necessary in politics. People will not always attain what they strive for, but they find dignity in the striving itself, rather than in success. They begin novel narratives, but the conclusions of those narratives always remain in doubt. In fact, while Kennedy mentions “success” twice, he characterizes it both times as uncertain, first as something that will come only as the result of “pay[ing] any price, bear[ing] any burden, meet[ing] any hardship” (the “success of liberty”), and second as something within the power of

citizens alone: “In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than in mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course” (J. Kennedy 1961). As it is in Arendt’s conception of action, the uncertainty Kennedy emphasizes is mitigated to an extent by *promises*, Arendt’s one guarantor against the chaotic nature of action: Kennedy makes six “pledges” to other nations on behalf of America (J. Kennedy 1961). The ability to speak words, to do deeds, to make promises, to begin, and to do it all in a space of uncertainty—together these abilities form a definition for the “freedom” at the heart of Kennedy’s address. Kennedy’s “freedom” is freedom as a practice.

In two 1968 speeches, remarks at the University of Kansas in March and an April address in Cleveland titled “On the Mindless Menace of Violence,” Robert F. Kennedy describes a space of visibility in which the practice of freedom can take place, a space similar to the space of visibility that Arendt argues is necessary for action. In both speeches, Kennedy discusses the need for societal change (“[O]nly a cleansing of our whole society can remove this sickness [violence] from our souls”⁸ [R. Kennedy 1968b]) and hinges the argument of his March speech, that America is suffering from a crisis of confidence, on the metaphor of a “national soul” (R. Kennedy 1968a). I have pointed out that conceptual moves like these in the discourses of the psy-sciences have assisted in the expansion of the social realm. However, Kennedy’s “national soul” and his “society” are distinctly political spaces, not social spaces. In fact, although in Arendt’s lexicon these terms would be directly opposed to a public realm, in Kennedy’s lexicon they take on the public realm’s key features. The “malaise of spirit” that ails the national soul is “discouraging *initiative*,

⁸ Kennedy is quoted as referring to a collective “soul” in the transcriptions of his April speech, but it is clear from its audio recording that he says “souls.”

paralyzing will and action, and dividing Americans from one another, by their age, their views and by the color of their skin” (R. Kennedy 1968a, emphasis added). A breakdown in the *ability to act* and a parallel breakdown in people’s mutual recognition of each other’s freedom—these fractures in the *public* realm are the problems Kennedy attempts to address with his metaphor of the national soul.

Similarly, in “On the Mindless Menace of Violence,” Kennedy’s cleansing of “society” involves ending “the violence of institutions,” violence inflicted through poverty, discrimination, hunger, and destitution (R. Kennedy 1968b). But, as he says, “we cannot vanquish [the spirit of hatred and revenge] with a program, nor with a resolution” (R. Kennedy 1968b). Only each person’s *recognition* of the other’s common humanity would bring about change. Rather than enact a new policy, Americans should:

perhaps remember, if only for a time, that those who live with us are our brothers, that they share with us the same short moment of life; that they seek, as do we, nothing but the chance to live out their lives in purpose and in happiness, winning what satisfaction and fulfillment they can. (R. Kennedy 1968b)

This recognition of our shared mortality and our shared hope for freedom can create social change, but the social change is *not an end in itself*. The aim of reducing social division is to allow for each person to present himself as he chooses to others, others with the ability to do the same. For Kennedy, institutional violence threatens public life and visibility because it enacts “the breaking of a man's spirit by denying him the chance to stand as a father and *as a man among other men*. And this too afflicts us all” (R. Kennedy 1968b, emphasis added). It “afflicts us all” because for Kennedy, freedom depends on others being free as well. The space of visibility articulated in

Robert Kennedy's rhetoric complements John F. Kennedy's active freedom by emphasizing the space required to practice it. The space and the freedom in which it takes place are inseparable: Robert, like John, sees acting as "beginning." Robert Kennedy concludes his speech on violence with a hope for a beginning: "surely we can *begin* to work a little harder to bind up the wounds among us and to become in our own hearts brothers and countrymen once again" (1968b). Together, the Kennedys created space for a public realm in their rhetoric. In doing so, they imagined citizenship as a public duty of action, encouraging those who listened to strive for a fuller political capacity.

Of course, that the Kennedys used language imagining a citizenship closer to what Arendt desired does not by itself suggest that the American political imagination at large opened up space for action in the 1960s. Like Arendt, the Kennedys were influenced by classical history and literature, which could explain their shared commitment to beginnings, deeds, uncertainty, and visibility. Undoubtedly, the Kennedys' view of what citizenship ought to include was uniquely expansive. However, while he presents a sharply different view of the role of the state, Barry Goldwater too presents a model of citizenship that gives a central role to something very close to an Arendtian action. His 1964 speech accepting the Republican Presidential nomination makes it the essential feature of citizenship.

"This Nation," says Goldwater in his address, "should again thrive upon the *greatness* of all those things which we, we as individual citizens, *can and should do*" (1964, emphasis added). As with the Kennedys, deeds play a central role in Goldwater's citizenship. For him, they must accompany words: "the administration

which we shall replace has...talked and talked and talked and talked the *words* of freedom, but it has failed and failed and failed in the *works* of freedom” (Goldwater 1964, emphasis added). Goldwater mocks the Kennedy reputation for eloquence, but rather than devalue words, Goldwater’s barb emphasizes that speakers of words should not contradict their words with their actions. Goldwater himself also “talks the words of freedom,” and does so beautifully,⁹ but promises to back those words up with parallel actions. Like Achilles, Goldwater strives to be both “a speaker of words *and* a doer of deeds” (Arendt 1998, 178). Further, Goldwater insists that legitimate government comes only from its citizens’ *active* support: “Security from domestic violence...is the most elementary and fundamental purpose of any government, and a government that cannot fulfill this purpose is one that cannot long command the *loyalty* of its citizens” (1964, emphasis added). Here Goldwater puts forward a specific view about government’s purpose, but what he takes to be shared across ideological divides is that government derives its authority from citizens’ loyalty. The citizen precedes and sanctions government for Goldwater, who opposes “those who elevate the state and downgrade the citizen” (1964).

Above all, for Goldwater, the state must not constrict the space where citizens can act. The inviolable core of his argument, this space for action serves as the criterion Goldwater measures policy against. “In our vision of a good and decent future, free and peaceful, there must be *room*,” Goldwater says, “room for

⁹ Goldwater occasionally even juxtaposes inverse phrases, a favorite rhetorical flourish of the Kennedy-Sorensen speechwriting team, as he does here: “freedom balanced so that order lacking liberty will not become the slavery of the prison shell; balanced so that liberty lacking order will not become the license of the mob and of the jungle” (1964).

deliberation of the energy and the talent of the individual; otherwise our vision is blind at the outset” (1964, emphasis added). The space for action, the room for action, is tied up with the ability to see possibilities for the future. Goldwater’s commitment to this space motivates his attack on Democrats for, in his view, equating political equality with economic equality: “Equality, rightly understood, as our founding fathers understood it, leads to liberty and to the emancipation of creative differences. Wrongly understood, as it has been so tragically in our time, it leads first to *conformity* and then to despotism” (Goldwater 1964, emphasis added). Conformity, which Goldwater attacks four times, literally collapses the space for action: “Our Republican cause is not to *level out the world* or make its people conform in computer regimented sameness” (1964, emphasis added). Conformity crushes the space for novelty. Its agent, as in Arendt’s work, is bureaucracy: “centralized planning, red tape, rules without responsibility, and regimentation without recourse,” and it quashes “the brisk pace of diversity and the genius of individual creativity” (Goldwater 1964). The trouble with excessive government for Goldwater appears to be less that it intrudes too far into private life and more that it hinders individuals’ potential for unique deeds. Without “room” for individual acts, in Goldwater’s view, freedom cannot exist.

For Goldwater, establishing and protecting this “room”—to “guarantee him opportunity to strive”—is the most important task of government, whatever it is that the citizen strives for: “diversity of ways, diversity of thoughts, of motives and accomplishments” are “cherished” (Goldwater 1964). Goldwater puts forward his views within the shared space, offering them up to citizens to interact with, and

eventually, to either reject or support. Even though Goldwater's argument centers around what he calls the "sanctity of private property," what Arendt called an "assumed one interest of society as a whole in economics" does not mark Goldwater's rhetoric. The space for action keeps public and economic life separate. Private property, for Goldwater, is quite literally a prerequisite for the "striving" government should protect: "We see in the sanctity of private property the only durable foundation for constitutional government in a free society" (Goldwater 1964). The only time Goldwater mentions personal wealth, he demeans it: "there's a virtual despair among the many who look beyond material success for the inner meaning of their lives" (1964). The space for action was more important than prosperity, for Goldwater.

While the citizens the Kennedys addressed were closer to Arendt's political actors than the citizens Goldwater addressed, in that the Kennedys' imagined citizen begins an uncertain narrative when he acts, both the Kennedys and Goldwater conceive of the citizen as an actor, an actor who acts within an established space. By the twenty-first century, this citizen as actor and the public space in which the citizen acts had both vanished from presidential rhetoric. Before I posit psychologization as a cause of this change, I examine the change itself.

Presidential Rhetoric of the Twenty-First Century: The Citizenry as Family

In their rhetoric, Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama both imagine citizens whose roles are determined not in a public realm but by standards of "family" life. In these models of citizenship, the citizen does not *act*. Rather, the citizen's

highest faculty is to *work*, to *build* personal and national “character.” Arendt’s discussion of the family as an apolitical institution makes it clear that this model threatens action and the public realm.

In the address given to Congress on September 20th, 2001 in response to the 9/11 attacks, Bush twice mentions “citizens” in order to declare something to America (“Fellow citizens, we’ll meet violence with patient justice” [2001b]). However, in each of the other six mentions of “citizen,” the word is used to refer to *victims*—either foreign victims of the 9/11 attacks or potential future attacks (“They [foreign nations] understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next” [Bush 2001b]), Americans unjustly imprisoned in Afghanistan, or as people scared and in need of comfort (“many citizens have fears tonight” [2001b]). The use of the word “citizen” in association with these passive roles provides a telling entrée into the contemporary framework for citizenship: it is mundane, limited, and specific, and has the characteristics of a household member.

President Bush’s view of citizenship becomes most clear in the moments when he appears to call for citizen action. In the September 20th, 2001 address, Bush responds to “Americans...asking: What is expected of us?” by requesting they retreat into their homes and families: “I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children” (2001b). What Bush makes out to be the public component of the citizens’ duty is, in fact, more private tasks—to donate money and to refrain from insulting ethnic and religious minorities:

I know many citizens have fears tonight. I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to *live* by them. No one should

be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith. I ask you to continue to *support* the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. (2001b; my emphasis)

Bush responds to the fears of citizens with a prescription for charity and kindness toward social peers—in other words, the kind of quiet good works Arendt made clear were private activities. Bush similarly conflates private life with public life in his first inaugural address, again at the very moment he seems to call for action. “What you do is as important as anything government does,” Bush says, but what he calls for citizens to do amounts to defending his proposed policies and performing good works: “to defend needed reforms against easy attacks; to serve your nation, beginning with your neighbor” (2001a). Presumably, those “needed reforms” would be determined by the president—the shepherd who decides what is necessary for the overall well-being of the nation—and “defended” by individuals who enlisted in the president’s cause. Bush immediately follows his call for defense and private charity with the words “I ask you to be citizens,” as though support for his policies and the enactment of good works were what constituted citizenship (2001a). “[C]itizens, not spectators,” Bush continues, “citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens, *building* communities of *service* and a nation of *character*” (2001a, emphasis added). The citizen here builds based on guidelines determined for private morality, but the citizen does not act.

Instead, the imagined citizen is motivated to complete his assigned task by the “beliefs” that he is assumed to hold: “Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves, but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no government program can replace it.

When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it” (Bush 2001a). Bush’s idea of a “spirit of citizenship,” then, comes from assumption of nationwide shared “beliefs.” This idea of the “spirit” suggests that rather than act, the citizen is acted upon by a mystical force “beyond” himself. In his second inaugural address, Bush repeats this pattern—placing the citizen at the mercy of a nebulous energy—by referring to freedom as an irresistible “force” that controls human events (2005). Bush endows this force, unlike the citizens he addresses, with active faculties. Freedom, a force, can “break,” “expose,” and “reward;” it “call[s]” both America and “every mind and every soul” around the world (Bush 2005).

Barack Obama’s rhetoric also conceives of an inactive citizen by using the vocabulary of private morality to describe citizens’ public role. As with Bush’s, Obama’s citizen is a social, rather than political, being. In a particularly powerful fusion of the properly public with the properly private, Barack Obama, in his 2011 State of the Union address, claims that the January 2011 Tucson shooting “reminded us that... We are part of the American family. We believe that...we are still bound together as one people; that we share common hopes and a common creed” (2011). In his 2004 convention address, Obama made another argument for commonality, listing several instances of economic injustice and explaining how they affect him:

If there is a child on the south side of Chicago who can’t read, that matters to me, even if it’s not my child. If there is a senior citizen somewhere who can’t pay for their prescription drugs, and having to choose between medicine and the rent, that makes my life poorer, even if it’s not my grandparent. If there’s an Arab American family being rounded up without benefit of an attorney or due process, that threatens my civil liberties. (Obama 2004)

Injustice here impacts the rhetorical “me”—it “*matters*” to the speaker and it “*makes*” his “life poorer.” Obama *feels* injustice. His example of an unfair arrest could have set the stage for a notion of freedom as a shared practice, but instead Obama again emphasizes his sense of personal deprivation—“that threatens *my* civil liberties.” Here, freedom is freedom in a negative sense—the freedom *from* government intrusion.

But what in social inequality and abridgement of rights negatively affects Obama? For Obama, they contradict another assumed shared “belief,” another private experience, and upset the proper functioning of nationwide family bonds. Obama’s 2004 address continues from the above quoted section with the following: “It is that fundamental belief: I am my brother’s keeper, I am my sister’s keeper, that makes this country work. It’s what allows us to pursue our individual dreams and yet still come together as one American family. E pluribus unum: out of many, one” (2004). In Obama’s framework, physical and institutional violence harms national *unity*, a unity weaved by family-like bonds and shared “fundamental belief[s].”

Arendt, as previously discussed, explains that the household is an antipolitical place, concerned with biological needs. The institution that inhabits the household, the family, is necessarily despotic. For the ancient Greeks, the household head ruled the family absolutely. His wife, his children, and his slaves were not free, but within the household itself, neither was the household head. Only by rising into the public realm, acting and speaking in the presence of others, could he be free. While American families are not the families Arendt used as her template for the division between public and private, they still possess the qualities Arendt identified as

apolitical. Greater gender equity, the ascent of the child-consumer, and the breakdown of local communities have changed the nature of, but not dissolved, parental authority. As the favorite line frustrated parents deliver to their children everywhere goes, “This isn’t a democracy.” The family, by its nature, remains primarily concerned with providing for and sustaining itself. To call a body of citizens a “family” is exactly the kind of confusion of public and private Arendt criticized, the kind of confusion that supports the social realm’s dominance.

Contrasting the Two Eras

From the 1960s to the twenty-first century, American political rhetoric shifted away from a model of the citizen as a public actor to a citizen as an inactive subject, a household member whose highest common calling is to contribute to the work of building a society. The shift marks a complete abandonment of the language of an Arendtian public in favor of the language of an Arendtian social. It also marks the effects of psychologization on political imagination. James L. Nolan Jr.’s study of the Lincoln-Douglas, Kennedy-Nixon, Reagan-Mondale, and Clinton-Bush-Perot debates reveals a gradual evolution away from the use of refined logical arguments, Aristotelian logos, in favor of ethical appeals made with therapeutic vocabulary, or a “therapeutic ethos” (Nolan 1998, 243). President Clinton, in particular, according to Nolan, used language of “feelings” and active listening, both derived from psychotherapeutic discourse, to win the presidency and to justify his policy decisions (Nolan 1998, 236-241). In Nolan’s view, the language used in politics both reflects

and shapes the characteristics of citizenship. In Foucaultian terms, rhetoric is both an effect of and a vehicle for power. I argue that the power on display in comparing my two selected eras of rhetoric is the power relations, the power relations I discussed in my previous two chapters, the pastoral relations produced by psychologization. The changing conceptions of citizenship show signs of psychologization's provision of pastoral tools—totalizing the American political community into a crafted social organism and individualizing its citizens into self-governed family members.

The words “principle,” “conviction,” “ideal,” “value,” and “character,” all part of the common vocabulary used by contemporary politicians, appear nowhere in the 1960s speeches I analyzed above, neither in the Kennedys’ nor in Goldwater’s. “Faith,” another indispensable word for today’s American politician, appears only in President Kennedy’s inaugural address.¹⁰ However, Kennedy uses the word only in reference to the “faithful friends” of allied nations and “the faith...which we bring to this endeavor” “of defending freedom” (J. Kennedy 1961). In both cases, “faith” is a means to an end—either stable international relationships or freedom—rather than something valued for its own merits. “Truth,” too, has a very limited role in the selected rhetoric of the 1960s. Only in Robert Kennedy’s address on violence does the word appear at all, in a somber and tangential thought to which Kennedy provides no follow-up: “The question is whether we can find in our own midst and in our own hearts that leadership of humane purpose that will recognize the terrible *truths* of our existence” (1968b, emphasis added). Goldwater does refer to the “old ways,” ways of

¹⁰ Robert Kennedy is quoted in transcriptions as saying “this common bond of faith” in his speech on violence, but from the audio it is clear he says “common bond of *fate*.”

freedom, as “true” (1964), but that which is true is a practice, a “way,” rather than an idea to which one internally assents.

Many locate the cause for the shift toward the rhetoric of truths, ideals, and character in the increased importance of using religiously-tinted language in American politics. However, I argue that what unites this new vocabulary is, rather, a psychologized, pastoral approach to politics. The approach is preoccupied with the internal experience of the individual, while it simultaneously insists on treating political community as a social organism in need of treatment. The language used reflects a psychologized America—having made its inner experiences matters for examination and governance, these experiences become common, public matters.

In the speeches I surveyed from the twenty-first century, the words absent from the 1960s rhetoric appear consistently. In his second inaugural address, President Bush uses them to define freedom:

In America's *ideal* of freedom, the public interest depends on private *character* - on integrity, and tolerance toward others, and the rule of conscience in our own lives. Self-government relies, in the end, on the governing of the self. That edifice of *character* is built in families, supported by communities with standards, and sustained in our national life by the *truths* of Sinai, the Sermon on the Mount, the words of the Koran, and the varied faiths of our people. Americans move forward in every generation by reaffirming all that is good and *true* that came before—ideals of justice and conduct that are the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Bush 2005, emphasis added)

The language here is focused on solid, unchanging objects, objects that exist in the mind—ideals and truths. Freedom is not a practice, not even a “way” (Goldwater 1964), but an “ideal.” It is an ideal that comes from family life, and it follows the

same rules in public as it does in the family where it learned its original “truth,” guidelines for moral behavior upheld by otherworldly consequences for violation of those guidelines. The “ideal” brings about a shared goal—a rule by nobody—toward which all should work and build.

Obama similarly refers to freedom as a solid object, calling it a “gift” in his inaugural address (2009). In his 2004 convention speech, Obama deftly ties the objects that constitute freedom and home life together, expressing a wholly social understanding of America’s political community. After reciting the opening of the Declaration of Independence, Obama sums it up as follows:

That is the true genius of America, a *faith*—a faith in simple dreams, an insistence on small miracles; that we can tuck in our children at night and know that they are fed and clothed and safe from harm; that we can say what we think, write what we think, without hearing a sudden knock on the door; that we can have an idea and start our own business without paying a bribe; that we can participate in the political process without fear of retribution, and that our votes will be counted—at least most of the time. This year, in this election we are called to reaffirm our *values* and our commitments... (Obama 2004, emphasis added)

For Obama, the defining characteristic of America as a nation is its unquestionable and internal “faith” in its “values,” including “freedom.” Obama’s definition of freedom, however, is purely negative—it is the freedom to live out private life without interference. Some of the experiences worth protecting that Obama mentions are the kinds of internal experiences that have been brought into the gaze of self-examination by psychologization—dreaming, thinking, having an idea, fearing. Others are those which lead to emotional gratification and self-fulfillment, but, in Arendt’s view, belong in the properly private realm—feeding children and starting a business. Even thinking and writing are kept safe in the home, behind a “door.”

Obama's description of political life—"we can participate in the political process without fear of retribution"—takes on a distinctly negative, private character. This is not the kind of general, national fear cited by Franklin Roosevelt—it is the fear brought on by an attack on one's self. Political participation happens "without *fear*," that is, without a negative emotional experience, but rather than begin something new, it simply contributes to an on-going "process." Obama's identification of the household as the location of freedom inverts Arendt's identification of the public as the location of freedom. It is little wonder, then, that while Arendt considers public action to be "like a miracle," Obama locates his "miracles" in the life processes of the household.

It is little wonder, too, that, in sharp contrast to Robert F. Kennedy's, Obama's earlier discussed sense of shared injustice is expressed in subjective terms—how injustice makes him *feel*. Though Kennedy too connects individual suffering to collective suffering several times, Kennedy's sense of shared suffering came from a breakdown of the public space of mutual trust and recognition, the space necessary for someone "to stand...as a man among other men," the space whose honor is "degraded" by violence (R. Kennedy 1968b). Kennedy hopes to see Americans "become brothers and countrymen once again" in order that the plurality damaged by violence might be reconstituted (R. Kennedy 1968b). In short, for both Obama and Kennedy, injustice impacts everyone in the nation, not just the people at which it is directly targeted. However, while Kennedy's injustice clouds the space of appearance required for freedom and dignity, Obama's affects his sense of emotional well-being. Obama's cataloguing of the various personal effects of injustice on his sense of well-

being bears the unmistakable mark of the cataloguing required by the pastoral technique of psychotherapy. The results of the two speaker's different approaches are worlds apart. While Kennedy's invites citizen *action*, Obama's invites the far different *work*: for Obama, "values" are settled, and "beliefs" are shared.

The reach of psychologization in rhetoric becomes particularly clear in President Bush's September 20, 2001 address, when Bush outlines changes and consistencies bound to mark Americans' lives after the 9/11 attacks:

It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to *normal*. We'll go back to our lives and routines, and that is good. Even *grief recedes with time* and grace. But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day, and to whom it happened. We'll remember the moment the news came -- where we were and what we were doing. *Some will remember an image* of a fire, or a story of rescue. Some will *carry memories* of a face and a voice gone forever.
(2001b, emphasis added)

This passage begins with Bush expressing a hope for a return to normalcy, a state he defines as that which typically takes place in properly private space—"we'll go back to our lives and routines." He offers some therapeutic comfort, offering up the well-worn dictum that deep emotional pain passes "with time." Then, right in the moment of vulnerability brought on by the promise of comfort, Bush jars his listener, first by evoking the terrifying imagery of 9/11, and then by calling up the memory of dead loved ones. This is a skillful emotional manipulation, combining therapeutic ethos with vivid, horrifying pathos. Such manipulation is nothing new to politics, but it is here endowed with a cutting sensitivity to the internal, emotional processes of the individual.

In the end, the treatment President Bush prescribed for the national trauma inflicted by 9/11 was two undeclared wars, a controversially intrusive set of new security legislation, and the establishment of a legal no-man's land in Guantanamo Bay. While I do not claim to have the ability to prove a direct causal link between the inactive model of citizenship psychologization has helped produce and the American government's remarkable cession of power to the executive branch over the same period, the correlation between the two does, to me, invite further study. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that psychologization has helped entrench what Arendt called the "organic metaphors" used in politics. Whether or not these metaphors lead to political violence, as Arendt believed, remains a question for others to answer definitively.

Contesting Psychologization

I have argued that the changes brought about in public and private life by psychologization have helped solidify the grip of the social realm on properly private and properly public spaces. Psychologization has created a network of unbalanced, pastoral power relations, individualizing people into self-governing, social beings. It has also assisted in the degradation of the notion of the public sphere by conceiving of political community as a treatable, social organism. The effects of this continuing process on the American political imagination are particularly clear from the changes in political rhetoric from the 1960s to the twenty-first century.

What, then, can the political actor, committed to novelty and action, hope to do in response? Contesting psychologization on its own terms is one possible

strategy, but it is not without its own set of undesirable results. The psy-sciences have provided verifiable truths and real comfort to many. Though Cushman may be rhetorically excessive when he claims the contemporary “self” suffers from “emptiness,” there is no doubt that the knowledge and expertise provided by psychologists, therapists, and psychiatrists has helped fill a gap left by the removal of what Cushman refers to as “shared meaning” (1993, 600). With so many sources of human truth and comfort—religion, philosophy, literature, art, community—pronounced dead or at least thoroughly unreliable, what is the good of contesting one more? There may be nothing to gain from doing so.

Nevertheless, for all the good it has done, the rise of the psy-sciences has also helped foster the “passive sterility” Arendt feared when writing *The Human Condition* (1998, 312). Though it provides comfort, the discourse of the psy-sciences also provides false certainty in the face of the unexplainable mysteries of human relationships. The comfort provided by the psy-sciences is an anesthetic, working to reduce tolerance for the miraculous novelty that is always promised by the human faculty of action. Certainly, we gain something when unanswerable questions about intersubjectivity are soothed away with referrals to the therapist, statements about human nature, or the assurance that what we are experiencing is normal. However, we also lose something when the pain and uncertainties of living with others is dulled, and when it is recommended by those with authority to live as though the uncertainty can be mitigated with testing, or as though the issues of interpersonal relationships can be solved with therapy, or as though the pain of life’s circumstances can be deadened with psychotropic drugs. Though Arendt provides what I believe to be a

compelling vocabulary for describing what exactly in the human experience all this threatens to deprive us of, it is still difficult to put into words. Nevertheless, I believe it was the same sense of loss brought on by psychologization that must have been part of what motivated the 1961 caution of Trappist monk Thomas Merton: “it begins to dawn on us that it is precisely the sane ones who are the most dangerous... The whole concept of sanity in a society where spiritual values have lost their meaning is itself meaningless” (2000, 99). Arendt saw it with Eichmann, and Merton saw it in those who “coolly estimate how many millions of victims can be considered expendable in a nuclear war” (2000, 100)—prioritizing what Foucault called the “salvation” of “well-being” over a direct confrontation with harsh realities has the potential to unleash an inhuman variety of violence.

Despite this, I am not categorically opposed to the psy-sciences and the pastoral power relations they have helped create. I myself have relied on both psychotherapy and psychotropic drugs to function in the manner deemed appropriate by the society of which I am inescapably a member. I am undoubtedly a product of psychologization. Further, I have no interest in contesting the scientific validity of the psy-sciences’ findings. Though the novelty inherent in each individual and the potential for beginning found in action ensure that psychology will never be the ‘pure’ science it aspires to be, the findings of any scientific discipline can be used for all varieties of purposes. However, what has been unquestionably destructive to the human experience, particularly so in America, has been the transfer of the logic and methods of the psy-sciences to politics. As I have shown, though, the discourse of the psy-sciences as it stands makes its penetration into politics unavoidable. It works in

two directions, as does the social realm for which it is a tool: the pastoral mechanisms employed by the psy-sciences and the governing institutions they cooperate with rationalize inner life, while they simultaneously elevate these rationalized processes to the level of common concern. Therefore, in order to challenge the effects of psychologization on American politics, the discourse of the psy-sciences itself would likely have to change.

How this change could come about is a question beyond my ability to answer. Like Foucault, I believe that “we have to promote new forms of subjectivity” (1982, 785), but I can only speculate about what might be productive strategies for doing so. Interesting possibilities seem to lie in a re-thinking of the psy-sciences’ purposes from within the disciplines themselves. For instance, in *Moving Beyond Prozac, DSM, and the New Psychiatry*, Bernard Lewis attempts to lay the groundwork for a “theoretically informed postpsychiatry,” in contrast to the stridently “atheoretical psychiatry” I discussed in Chapter Three (2006, 10-11). “Postpsychiatry” would attempt to loosen psychiatry as a discipline, opening it up to more perspectives from social theorists, and leaving room for constant debate. Rather than conceiving of itself as a discipline progressively moving from “psychiatric Myth to psychiatric Truth” or toward increasingly accurate consensus, Lewis would like to see psychiatry take on additional “dissensus” and expand the field of what it considers to be acceptable theories (2006, 5). Similarly, in *Psychology Without Foundations*, Steve D. Brown and Paul Stenner argue for a psychology overtly informed by philosophers and social theorists. Re-oriented this way, psychology would constantly and transparently evolve its basic assumptions—thus, a “creative and reflexive foundationalism”

(Brown and Stenner 2009, 3). Psychology would be an explicitly self-created discipline, studying people in varied, changing ways.

Nevertheless, it seems that psychologization only accelerates. Certainty is difficult to upend, after all. As Arendt noted, when you stir up the “wind of thought” and dismantle the foundations you take to be true, “you may be paralyzed” (2003b, 176). American society, a society in the Arendtian sense, reserves little room for this kind of destabilizing, inherently unproductive thought, especially in politics. It is difficult to imagine an American political movement taking shape around anything other than economic or social interests—either seeking a healthier economy, better economic opportunities, or admission to the social realm in exchange for conforming to its norms. Perhaps politics is simply not the arena in which to contest the changes brought about by psychologization. Perhaps that task should be left to the arts, to philosophy, to cultural studies, and to science studies. Given that all these play such marginal roles in American social life, and given that the political effects of psychologization have been so profound, I question whether American political actors can afford to leave it to others to do the hard work of finding new subjectivities. Psychologized conceptual frameworks will have to be challenged in words and deeds—in rhetoric, in public gestures, in imaginative and novel uses of properly public space. However, the walls around established modes of citizenship are high. It may be impossible to re-claim properly private and properly public spaces from the social. In short, prospects for contesting psychologization and re-activating American citizenship are bleak. But perhaps this is the very condition necessary for the pathos

of novelty to emerge. As Arendt never failed to note, an action, alone among life's activities, always defies the odds.

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