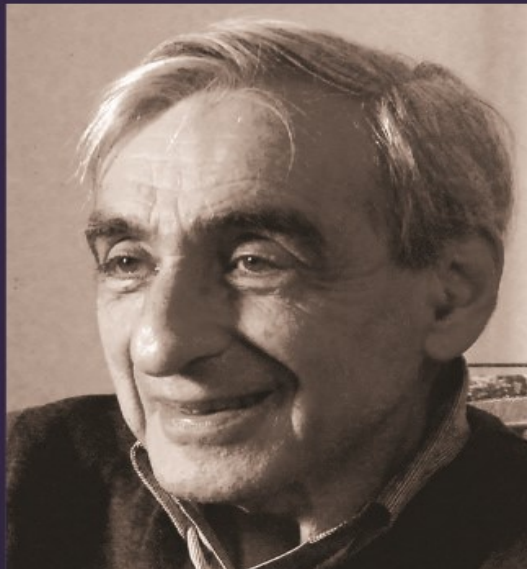
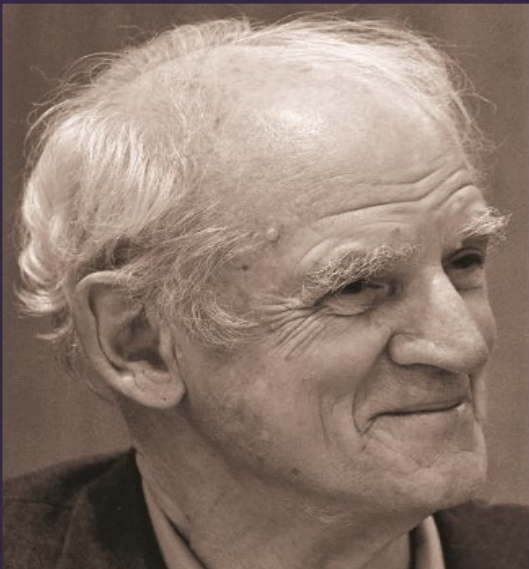


The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy
The McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values

ON THE MEANINGFULNESS OF DEMOCRACY

A Discussion with

CHARLES TAYLOR & MICHAEL WALZER



Two of our most eminent public intellectuals reflect on the philosophical and religious foundations of democratic politics and culture.

November 15, 2019
9.30AM-12.30PM

Caldwell Hall Auditorium
The Catholic University of America

620 Michigan Avenue NE, Washington DC 20064
Accommodations/RSVP: cua-rvp@cua.edu, 202/319-6089

On The Meaningfulness of Democracy

These are difficult days for democracy. Democratic institutions find themselves threatened, on the one hand, by nationalist movements and leaders with authoritarian tendencies, and on the other by waning civic engagement and the power of economic interests. At such a time we are well-advised to reflect on some fundamental questions concerning what makes democracy meaningful and worthwhile. How do democratic practices contribute to efforts to lead a meaningful life? How can traditional communal systems of meaning, be they religious or philosophical, contribute to—or harm—a vibrant democratic culture? How do the politics of meaning and interpretation shape democratic life? What intellectual resources for meaning-making might help revive the ethos of democracy today? For a deep and wide-ranging exploration of the relations between democracy and meaning, it is hard to imagine two better guides than the eminent philosophers and public intellectuals Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer.

Program

9:00 Doors Open—Sign-in

9:30 Welcoming Remarks

President John Garvey, The Catholic University of America

9:35 Introduction to the Conversation

William Barbieri, McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values

9:45 Opening Statements

Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer

10:15 Conversation

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Conversation with the Audience

12:30 Adjournment

On The Meaningfulness of Democracy

About the Speakers

Charles Taylor is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at McGill University in Montreal. He is an internationally acclaimed scholar of intellectual history, the philosophy of social science, hermeneutics, political theory, and religious studies. His best-known books are *Sources of the Self* (1989) and *A Secular Age* (2007). He has been awarded the Templeton Prize, the Kyoto Prize, the Berggruen Prize, the Kluge Prize and, most recently, the Ratzinger Prize. In Canada he was a candidate for the House of Commons for the New Democratic Party and from 2007 to 2008 he was co-chair of the Quebec government's Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences. His current book project is *Democratic Degenerations*.

Michael Walzer is Professor Emeritus of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. One of America's foremost political thinkers and moral philosophers, he works in the fields of democratic theory, the ethics of war, distributive justice, social criticism, and the Jewish political tradition. He is the author of over thirty books, including *Just and Unjust Wars* (1977), *Spheres of Justice* (1983), and *On Toleration* (1997). He has delivered the prestigious Tanner Lectures on Human Values and the Horkheimer Lectures, and received the Spinozalens award for his work on ethics and society. He is a long-time political activist and served as co-editor of the journal *Dissent* for over three decades. His most recent book is *A Foreign Policy for the Left* (2018).

This event is sponsored by the Council for Research and Values in Philosophy (www.crvp.org) and the McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values at the Catholic University of America.

On The Meaningfulness of Democracy

The Council for Research in Values & Philosophy The CUA McLean Center for the Study of Culture & Values

The Catholic University of America McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values (MCSCV) was founded in 2000 and named after George F. McLean, the founder of the Center, in 2017. It is affiliated with the international Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP), founded in 1983 to advance the following goals, objectives and operations.

Goals

- To understand one's own cultural heritage, to unfold the cultural values that shape a people's aspirations and motivate their actions.
- To interpret other cultures and to develop a positive yet critical appreciation thereof.
- To build cooperation among peoples: to work on issues of harmony and relations between peoples with a view to promoting peace within nations and on a global scale.

Objectives

- To develop research on the nature, interpretation and development of cultures.
- To apply cultural heritages to the challenges of contemporary change.
- To coordinate these efforts regionally and globally.
- To heal deep tensions through deepening global understanding.
- To provide post-graduate education for a new generation of professors and leaders on issues related to their own and other cultural heritages and their interaction.

Operations

- Mobilizing research teams for the study of the nature of cultures and their application to the challenges of contemporary change.
- Organizing extended seminars for deeper exploration of these issues and regional conferences for the coordination and critique of this research.
- Publishing and distributing the results of this research in print — thus far over 300 volumes — and in full text on the web (www.crvp.org)