Zagorin elaborately addresses Hobbes' view on the relation between God, natural law, and civil law, but in the end it remains unclear how the legal positivism and secularism that Zagorin ascribes to Hobbes would allow the latter to consider natural law as an objective and morally obliging standard for the sovereign and its subjects.

Besides, it seems quite difficult to recognise genuine moral obligation in Hobbes on the basis of his concept of natural law, which (apart from its correlation with self-interest) is considered by Hobbes as inherently inconsistent with men's liberty and natural right.[3] Zagorin's book is a helpful introduction into the basics of Hobbesian politics, the prominent secondary debates, and the broader historical context of natural law theory, which will inspire many of its readers with a positive awareness of the potentially moral dimensions in Hobbes' political writings.

Stephen Coleman and Jay G. Blumler, *The Internet and Democratic Citizenship: Theory, Practice and Policy* **(New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009)**

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Most of the previous studies tend to understand the Internet-democracy relationship through theory, observation or prescription. Moving beyond those studies, Stephen Coleman and Jay G. Blumler's book examines the relationship between the Internet and democratic citizenship from three of theoretical, empirical, and policy perspectives. In other words, the authors aim to explore how the contemporary notion of e-democracy could be theorised, investigated, and implemented. In order to explain e-democracy more clearly, Coleman and Blumler, in the first three chapters, discuss three major approaches that give meaning to the concept of e-democracy: democratic deliberation;

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3   Cf. *Leviathan* 14.3.

public communication; and direct democracy. Supported by empirical findings which demonstrate widespread public disengagement due to the lack of communicative connections of today's liberal democracies, they argue that there is a requirement for "a more deliberative democracy" (p.38) which would be done by utilizing new media technologies to create a more effective and direct form of democratic interaction.

In the next two chapters, the authors apply this premise to the examination of case studies which consist of what they call "e-democracy from above" (i.e. the online parliamentary consultations of the U.K. Parliament and the community campaign creator of the Bristol City Council) and "e-democracy from below" (i.e. the BBC iCan e-democracy project, netmums.com, and the U.K.-based Stop the War Coalition online). Although these case studies indicate some limitations of e-democracy, particularly those regarding the low interactivity between policy makers and citizens, the authors still believe that the Internet possesses vulnerable potential to improve public communication which eventually enhances democracy. To realize the democratic potential of the Internet, Coleman and Blumler suggest not only initiating suitable policies and institutional support but also creating a civic commons in cyberspace.

With a renovated and interesting conceptualization of democratic citizenship and the potential of the internet, the authors succeed in their research goal. They note the ultimate goal of this book is to explain how the Internet can be utilized as an "institutional innovation" to "nurture critical citizenship and radical energy, while at the same time opening up representative governance to new respect for public discourse and deliberation" (p. 3). There are several key concepts the authors apply differently from previous studies that makes this book more theoretically useful than other books in the same field. Coleman and Blumler mention "critical citizenship and radical energy," (p. 3) referring this phrase as the new expectations and meanings of citizenship in which the growing number of people who often expect to be heard and heeded on more occasions and matters than the ballot boxes of the Polling Day are being observed. When talking about

being citizens, they prefer using the term "democratic citizenship," which they conceptualize as being citizens by "regarding themselves as a collectivity precedes any notion of a bounded political space to which they belong" (p. 6). In addition, democratic citizens, for Coleman and Blumler, are unlike the "state-centered citizens" whose their relationship to the state is already imagined and constituted. Rather, democratic citizens are those who enter to the political spaces toward autonomous civic practices.

However, instead of discussing this term by distinguishing it sharply to the state-centered approach, and therefore ignoring the role of political institutions, Coleman and Blumler argue that for people to engage closer to democracy, democratic institutions and processes must become sensitized to the ways in which citizens express their opinions, desires, and concerns. They ask for new spaces of political citizenship, spaces in which "civic energies" can consolidate comprehensively and productively, and suggest the Internet (or the cyberspace) as such politically vibrant spaces.

According to Coleman and Blumler, the Internet is not just a new technology but "an empty space or institutional void in which tensions between state-centric and democratic citizenship can be played out" (p.7). That is, on one hand, the Internet provides new digital and interactive channels for representatives and represented and governments and governed to communicate between each other. On the other hand, the Internet opens new spaces for citizens who have few other spaces available for them to tell their stories and express their fears and desires in constructive democratic ways. As a result, the Internet has a potential to improve public communications and enrich democracy. However, for Coleman and Blumler, such a potential could be realized only with suitable policies and institutional support.

The policy analysis chapter (chapter 6, *Shaping E-Democracy*) is another part that makes this book noteworthy and innovative. This chapter focuses on a pragmatic question, how should the

role of the Internet be conceived and enacted in contemporary democracy? The authors respond to this question by first employing the discursive construction of e-democracy approach to examine how the U.K. national government has attempted to shape a policy for e-democracy. They find five key principles the British government used in enacting e-democracy project: *inclusion* – a voice for all; *openness* – electronic provision of information; *security and privacy* – a safe place; *responsiveness* – listening and responding to people; and *deliberation* – making the most of people's idea (p. 149). These principles have been applied to four main areas of policy: E-Voting; Local e-Participation; Government Dialogues; and Civic Initiatives (pp. 150-153). This review provides an adequate fundamental picture for the authors (and other scholars) to evaluate how e-democracy policy in the U.K. can stimulate democratic participation, and to what extent the key success of policy implementation could be.

However, when Coleman and Blumler deal with this evaluation, there are some weak points in their methodology. That is, instead of conducting a firsthand empirical analysis to support their arguments, the authors review participatory research, both those that measure individual-level determinants of whether people participate in politics and those that focus their analysis on participation in public policy-formation and decision making. Such a review may provide a clear theoretical idea for the implementation of e-democracy policy to be successful. As the authors suggest, creating "spaces" within which civic practices are placed, ordered and discovered is an important way in which policy can shape democratic citizenship (p. 162). Nevertheless, for the pragmatic question the authors raise in the early part of this chapter, a more systematic and empirical approach is required. In this sense, while knowing what should be done about e-democracy is good, understanding why that is a proper way is better.

The feasibility of the book's recommendations is another weak point. It is true that today, the Internet is widespread, not limited to more advanced and industrialised countries but also the developing countries. Moreover, the Internet, as Coleman and

Blumler indicate, has a great potential in solving problems of contemporary democracy. Thus, the authors' recommendation in establishing an independent government-funded agency along with creating civic commons is remarkable. However, this recommendation may be realized only for well-established democracies where the state and its political institutions are well-functioned and have capacities to deal with demands or problems raised by variety groups of people. In a society where democracy is new, a preparation stage for promoting an effective e-democracy such as by establishing political institutions that are properly designed, trustworthy, and efficacious as well as empowering pluralistic civil society would be required. Overloading active political participation to young democracies does not spontaneously bring advancement and consolidation to societies; indeed, it may even harm young democracies. Apart from these weaknesses, this well-written book is an important contribution to e-democracy, political communication, and policy literature.

Mark A. R. Kleiman, *When Brute Force Fails. How to have Less Crime and Less Punishment* **(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).**

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With a rate of about 1 percent incarceration per capita (i.e. the highest in the world) and damage from crime reaching 10 percent of GDP, the US allocates large budget resources to tackle this issue and faces serious deadlocks in the crime control domain. Starting from these facts, Mark Kleiman's "*When Brute Force Fails*" raises awareness of the need to alleviate both the damages caused by crime and the burden that its control exercises on tax-payers. The analysis is based on the US experiences with crime and crime control, and that is neither a disadvantage, nor a weakness, but an almost exhaustive presentation of the evolution of crime rate, incarceration and public costs.