We Are All Liberals Now:
Freedom and Liberalism in the Liberal Democrat Party and Beyond[1]
Stephen Backhouse

The Liberal Democrats are one of the smallest parties, but they have the biggest ideas. One cannot have liberalism without 'liberty'. Liberty is a value that infuses all western politics and is not confined to any one party. The importance of liberty for the liberal western consensus arose from Christian reflection on the nature of creaturely and Divine life. Yet behind the one word 'liberty' lie two competing, even opposite, meanings. The liberalism of the Liberal Democrat party and beyond exists in tension with the liberty of Christianity, but is not for that reason inimical to it. Western liberalism can be a good home for Christianity, for after all, Christians helped to create it.

Introduction

The Liberal Democrats may be one of the smallest parties, but they have the biggest ideas. Indeed, it is the very bigness of their central idea – liberalism – that perhaps explains the smallness of the party. If you value liberty of conscience and freedom of association, if you think individuals should not be cowed by groups, if you value tolerance and fairness then you are, in some very important ways, a liberal, even if you also vote Tory, or Labour, or UKIP, or Green or support a national party which seeks self-determination. Liberalism is pervasive throughout our society, to the extent that no one political party can truly be said to own it anymore.

The Liberal Democrats, then, are faced with the problem of carrying the torch for a set of ideas with which everyone already implicitly agrees. Thus it is a common refrain amongst Liberal Democrats that the other main parties routinely steal their policies. For the same reasons it is an equally common refrain amongst the electorate that no one really knows what the Liberal Democrats stand for. Within the party, too, there is disagreement as to how their liberalism works itself out differently than the 'liberalism' of the left or of the right. In this essay it will not do to write an examination of specific Liberal Democrat policies or politicians. The ground is constantly shifting as the necessary compromises of Coalition Government have worked, and will work, their course. Instead, the present piece starts from the assumption that, while the actual role of the party and its members will inevitably change, the ideological importance of the Liberal Democrats will remain for non-Christians and Christians alike.

In the present age, the Liberal Democrat Party has acquired something of a reputation as a haven for secular humanists. Yet while it is true that leading anti-religious campaigners such as former MP Evan Harris and Richard Dawkins are Liberal Democrats, some of the nation's most articulate Christian politicians (such as Baroness Shirley Willams, Alan Beith, Simon Hughes, Steve Webb and Tim Farron amongst others) also call the party home. Christians occupy key ideological and leadership positions within the party, and indeed, Christians constitute a high proportion of Liberal party membership.[2] Liberalism provides a place for the less religiously sure as well. Nick Clegg, a self-confessed agnostic who nevertheless attends church regularly and is raising his children as Catholic[3] probably represents a wider spread of society than do the angry fundamentalists found on either side of the religion/anti-religion divide.

These connections are no accident, for liberalism and Christianity are bedfellows, albeit at times uneasy ones. The impulse that attracts a certain sort of Christian to the party is similar to that which attracts a certain sort of secularist. The passion for social justice that drives the Christian is akin to that of the humanist human rights campaigner. 'Free thinkers' opposed to the domineering conventional wisdom from church or state have always found a home

in liberalism. Today it is liberal cultures that best provide the space for the social experiment that is Christianity to flourish. In turn, historically it was Christian thought which originally nurtured liberalism. Liberalism sprang from Christianity and its care for the liberty of individual human beings is a product of revolutionary seeds sown by the earliest Christians two thousand years ago.

Liberty
'For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery' (Galatians 5:1).

One cannot have liberalism without *liberty*. A generalised sense of liberty and freedom infuses all facets of Western society. More specifically, the tendency towards freedom informs all Liberal political decisions. Freedom, too, is a crucial component of Christian doctrine. Indeed, Christianity lies at the roots of liberal conceptions of what it is to be liberated. 'Wherever Christianity took root, it garnered converts not only to salvation in Christ but to the ideal of freedom'.[4] This is in contrast to the story a certain section of modern liberalism likes to tell about itself. A prime example can be seen in the philosopher A.C. Grayling and his surprising claim that '[t]he history of liberty proves to be another chapter… in the great quarrel between religion and secularism for without the latter there would (because there could) be no liberty at all'.[5] Yet this sort of claim is un-historical and demonstrably false. Our modern senses of liberty are inextricably linked – positively and negatively – with Christian notions of freedom. These notions themselves have grown from theological reflection on the nature of God and the world on the one hand, and from practical ethical assessment of human nature in the other. Thus, there are two main strands of 'freedom' in operation today, namely a sense of freedom *from* all constraints and a sense that true freedom means freedom *for* flourishing in a particular way. These two freedoms do not always coincide. This essay suggests some of the main points of congruence and tension between these two senses of freedom, as well as considering how Christian liberty fits within political liberalism.

Something from nothing
Modern notions of liberty have their provenance in the Christian idea of the freedom of creation and of the Creator. The story of 'freedom' has its beginning here, at the beginning of everything.

If God exists in any way like the Christian story of God says he exists, *then* that God is the ground of all creation, the one in whom we all live and have our being. The Christian articulation of 'God as Creator' says something about God, but it also says a lot about creation. The Christian doctrine of creation is not to be confused with the rather recent and muddled noisy conversation being had in some circles over *Creationism*. Historically, the Christian theology of creation is not about the mechanics of the generation and formation of life, but instead is a deep and rich reflection on the nature of reality. Christian thought is less concerned with the 'how' of creation than it is with the 'why'. Why is there something rather than nothing? What does it say about the stuff of nature to say that some*thing* has been carved out of *no*thing?

The heart of the Christian doctrine of creation is *creatio ex nihilo*. The idea that God created something out of nothing, and, crucially, that this something might have just as easily not happened at all. Matter did not *have* to exist, there is no compulsion driving the universe. In other words, freedom is built into the fabric of creation. In terms of the history of thought, this marks a revolution. The pre-Christian classical world-view, with its notions of controlling fate and necessity that binds all creatures, gods and men was re-worked by the Christian imagination. People and the world exist by God's choice, for his pleasure and his love. Furthermore, God does not *need* creation and was not forced to bring the world into existence. The world was not fated to exist; it is, fundamentally, free.

A well-known classical feature of Divinity is *omnipotence*. That a god should be all-powerful, unrestrained and unbounded is not unique to Christianity. The picture of freedom that is most naturally derived from this is an ideal of radical self-realisation, whereby nothing can hinder the aims of the one who wills. 'Perfect freedom' here means the absence of all restraint – an ability to get what one wills unhindered by the claims of others. With this pagan vision of perfectly realised freedom in mind, it is worth noting how Christians conceived of the absolute freedom of God. Within the Christian system God's freedom is always directed towards *relation* or *communion*. Rather than representing some intangible ideal of unfettered power or self-realisation, in the words of the Protestant theologian Karl Barth, 'God's freedom is not merely unlimited possibility or formal majesty and omnipotence, that is to say empty, naked sovereignty'. Instead, in his own freedom, God 'above all willed and determined himself to be the Father and the Son in the unity of the Spirit'.[6] Barth points out that this is not the freedom of the radically isolated

and aloof individual. Even the highest expression of perfect freedom is not one of solitary detachment. 'In God's own freedom there is encounter and communion... there is majesty and humility, absolute authority and absolute obedience; there is offer and response'.[7]

For Christian thought then, God's freedom is *for* the relation of his trinitarian self. In creation, God's freedom was *for* the stuff of existence. In the incarnation, God's freedom is *for* mankind. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is the Father of the Prodigal Son, the Good Shepherd and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian concept of God cannot be had apart from having a God who, in his omnipotent freedom, chose to commit himself to creation.

Here we can see the two senses of 'freedom' at play. The tension between the freedom of unhindered self-assertion (freedom *from*) and the freedom for engagement and relational flourishing (freedom *for*) is evident within theological reflection on the character of divine and incarnational omnipotence. Historically this tension has been even more manifest in reflection on the nature of human liberty.

Freedom *for*
The classical and early Christian sense of 'freedom' was primarily *teleological*, that is, purposeful. To say that a person is free in this sense is not to say that a person enjoys the ability to follow through with whatever he or she wills. Instead, freedom means being at liberty to realise one's true essence, and thus flourish. Here, liberty means freedom to live a life of virtue. This is determined not according to each individual's opinion or desire, but instead according to a reasoned, disciplined and shared reflection on 'the good'. Purposeful freedom seeks emancipation from *whatever* constrains human flourishing. Note that as well as other people, things or events, often what most constrains us is our own will. This sort of liberty often means precisely liberty from our own untutored passions, ignorance, habits and irrational choices. We are in bondage to our own wills. A life that always gets exactly what it wants is not a life that is free and lived to the full; it is a life crabbed, compulsive and spoilt.

In the present age, where the account of freedom *for* is maintained, it is largely maintained by Christians for Christian reasons. On a practical level, this can easily set Christian life and practice at odds with a culture intent on rival forms of liberty. For the American social theologian Stanley Hauerwas, the Christian's liberty is precisely the liberty of a life lived according to a good purpose:

'The salvation promised in the good news is not a life free from suffering, free from servitude, but rather a life that freely suffers, that freely serves, because such suffering and service is the hallmark of the Kingdom established by Jesus. As Christians we do not seek to be free but rather to be of use, for it is only by serving that we discover the freedom offered by God. We have learned that freedom cannot be had by becoming "autonomous" – free from all claims except those we voluntarily accept – but rather freedom literally comes by having our self-absorption challenged by the needs of another.'[8]

However, 'Liberty for a purpose' is no longer the dominant account of liberty, even amongst many Christians.

Freedom *from*
'Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another.'[9]

The freedom to serve an overriding purpose outside of the self runs directly against the dominant account of freedom since the eighteenth century. 'Freedom for' still has a voice within modern political liberalism,[10] however, its impact on the cultural imagination has been severely undermined by the power of freedom '*from*'.

The story told by the late Enlightenment is the story of human history developing to the point where persons are increasingly free from whatever constrains their own heroic will. Liberation means liberty from those antique notions such as divine purpose, overarching truth or natural law which might place unwelcome constraints upon self-determination. In this process, individuals are set free from those arbitrary authorities, traditions and institutions which claim intellectual and moral monopoly over persons. It is this story, or a variation of it, which Grayling and others have in mind when they narrate the typical story of liberty as being won from religion.

It is worth noting, however, that contra Grayling and other cheerleaders of the Enlightenment, the principle of autonomous freedom is not actually a principle of *rationality*. 'Freedom for us today is something transcendent even of reason… [Freedom] is its own justification'.[11] Instead, the chief value of this freedom is the inviolable liberty of self-determination – 'free-choice' is the ultimate arbiter of 'freedom'. The will is sovereign not to the degree that it is rational or 'enlightened' but only so far as it is beholden to nothing else. The lengths to which the self is constrained by nothing greater than itself is the measure of its liberty.

'Freedom *from*' expressly does not lead towards an ultimate horizon. Instead freedom's end is in the act of choosing itself. The proper term for the philosophical principle of choice operating in a fundamentally directionless environment is *nihilism*. To identify this ethos of modern liberalism as nihilistic is not necessarily to apply a term of abuse. As liberal philosophers such as John Gray have pointed out, a major task of the plural society is to learn how to live in a world with non-reconcilable world-views.[12] In this context nihilism is likely to be seen as a valid approach. Indeed, if there are no transcendent truths, if there is no ultimate horizon and no direction for human flourishing, then a thoroughgoing nihilism is the most honest and practical philosophy that we have.

Nihilism based on the autonomous freedom from authority, restraint and ultimate purpose may well lead to a peace of sorts. But this peace would be a far cry from the peace sought by liberal societies informed by Christianised principles. Even the non-Christian or secularist liberal might blench at a world where autonomous nihilism is given free reign. To see how this is so it is worth briefly looking at the most articulate visionary of the unfettered individual, the nineteenth century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche.

For Nietzsche, Christianity was ultimately the result of frightened humans seeking to escape from the harsh demands and realities of life. Unlike many of the current crop of 'New Atheists' filling the bookshelves, Nietzsche was no lazy despiser of a straw-man version of Christianity. When Nietzsche rejected Christianity he was rejecting a view of the world and of the divine that Christians themselves can recognise.

'No one would understand such a god: why should any one want him? … [T]imorous and demure; he counsels "peace of soul," hate-no-more, leniency, "love" of friend and foe. He moralizes endlessly; he creeps into every private virtue; he becomes the god of every man…'[13]

Nietzsche appreciated the deep roots of Christian thought and the implications of the doctrine of the incarnation for freedom, life and society. Rather than pretend that one could have the 'goods' of a Christian society without Christianity, Nietzsche took seriously the idea of a world without transcendent values. The setting of his famous pronouncement 'God is dead … and we have killed him'[14] has nothing to do with philosophically proving the non-existence of a deity. It is instead an insightful attempt to trace the social and ethical implications of a culture that is functionally atheistic. In such a world, Nietzsche recognises that there can only be individual lives thriving at the expense of others. There is no law of restraint, only a drive for autonomy and dominance which Nietzsche terms the 'Will to Power', or the 'instinct to freedom'.[15] Nietzsche proclaims the *Übermensch* (Superman) as the ultimate ideal and end goal of humanity. The Superman is someone who has so refined his Will to Power that he has freed himself from all outside influences and created his own values.[16] No one, not the weak, the poor, the slow or the old, has a right to claim on the good-will of the strong ones who live in azure isolation from the rest and from each other. For nihilism, there is no 'right', only 'might'.

Here, then, is the peace offered by supreme autonomous freedom.

Fantastical self-authorship
Very few cultural-political systems actively pursue the ethic of the Superman; those that do tend to inspire World Wars. Yet one need not look only to fascistic and genocidal regimes in order to see the adverse effect that philosophies of nihilistic individualism can have on society. The sense that freedom means freedom *from* anything that prevents individuals from becoming 'sovereign choosers' remains the dominant sense underlying our current liberal culture.

The harm to society wracked by relentless individualism, a culture of instant gratification and the equation of 'citizen' with 'consumer' is well known. There is no end to the ink spilled by columnists, politicians and religious

writers wrestling with the problems of our increasingly shallow, lonely and brutal world. Often Christian commentators are among the most strident critics. For the radical Marxist-Catholic critic Terry Eagleton:

'Self-authorship is the bourgeois fantasy par excellence. Denying that our freedom thrives only within the context of a more fundamental dependency lies at the root of a good deal of historical disaster. '[17]

The Protestant theologian Wolfgang Pannenburg suggests that our culture is in danger of dying as a result of its godless liberty:

'The dissolution of the traditional institutions of social life including family and marriage for the sake of promoting the emancipation of the individual leaves the individual to the fate of increasing loneliness in the midst of a noisy machinery of 'communication'. It is not likely that secular societies will be able in the long run to survive the consequences of the much-touted emancipation of the individual. '[18]

Liberal Democrat literature reveals a vision for the sort of secular, emancipated society of which Pannenberg and others are so pessimistic. Nick Clegg opens his party pre-manifesto by declaring 'I believe that the task of a liberal party is above all to empower every person to realise their own potential'.[19] Throughout the document, a person's potential is found not in their adherence or conformation to a wider social vision, but instead in their participation in a society that 'enables every person to get on in life' through tax reforms, choice in healthcare provision, devolution of political power, marriage reform including same-sex and humanist weddings, and increased freedom from dependence on ideological based education. For good or for ill, the self-authored sovereign chooser is alive and well in Lib Dem party rhetoric.[20]

Yet it is not only non-liberal Christians who are concerned about the corrosive influence of 'freedom' operating in a void bereft of transcendent value. Liberal thinkers can also be found at the forefront of those attempting to find solutions for a society broken by the individualistic version of liberalism. Navigating between the competing versions of freedom is the source of much liberal endeavour. For them, the tension between the liberty of the individual and the ability to promote a flourishing society needs to be preserved. So for example, the political philosopher and former leader of the Canadian Liberal Party Michael Ignatieff argues that the problem with most contemporary political systems is not that they are individualistic so much as they operate with an absence of any account of 'the good'. Without this, he notes, individuals are led to believe that any and all their needs and desires are legitimate.[21] At the end of his ground-breaking sociological study *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber suggests 'the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs'.[22] This sense of 'calling', for Weber, constituted one of the fundamental elements of the rise of modern culture. Will individuals be able to look beyond themselves, will they be able to persevere at their endeavours even in the absence of immediate gratification in a world which rejects belief in transcendent purpose? Weber is doubtful. 'The modern man is in general, even with the best will, unable to give religious ideas a significance for culture and national character which they deserve'.[23]

Impersonal law
The liberal impulse is always one in reaction against the arbitrary authority of kings, popes and other monopolies of power (hence the Liberal Democrat's platform of disestablishment). Yet at the same time liberalism seeks the regulation of social life by universal and impersonal laws. There are strong strands within the tradition that seek to ground liberty and purpose in something other than a named, personal and specific deity. While the 'traditional control mechanisms of the church, class, and political order were held to be unnatural',[24] candidates for alternative versions of the transcendent included such forces as History, Necessity, the World–Spirit, Deism, Laws of Nature and the Market amongst others. Politically, these turns to the 'transcendent' are inevitably worked out through emphasis on the rule of law, and in the provision of legal guarantees protecting individuals from overwhelming power or personalities. In economics, impersonal market forces and objective contract law replace dominant individuals or groups. Political liberals have long sought non-interference from government, the abolition of monopolies and free-trade for this reason.

In the name of liberty, liberals promote fiscal, racial, gender, civic, ecclesiastical, national, local and personal freedoms. Yet as a result of the competing natures of freedom *from* and freedom *for* these claims inevitably clash. The will of the individual will often impinge on the general good of society, and *vice versa*. For example: does the

autonomous liberty of a woman who chooses to drink while pregnant trump the freedom of her unborn child and the liberty of wider society who have to pay for that damaged child's healthcare?[25] How far should a liberal society allow the freedom of speech exercised by a racist bigot? Should there be restrictions on how much a person charges rent, pays a salary, leaves to his children? Should persons and groups be free to educate their children as they see fit, even if this clashes with the aims and needs of the state? The Liberal Democrats regularly juggle competing freedoms, accounting for their mixed-message policies. So, for example, the Lib Dem language of devolution and freedom sits in tension with their educational policy of consolidating state and local authority power over religious or special-interest groups,[26] or their economic policies limiting inheritance tax cuts.[27]

The well-known liberal strategy for practical politics in these matters is to refer to the harm principle from John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, the cornerstone symbolic text of the Liberal Democrats. For Mill, individuals should be free to do anything that does not result in harm to other individuals. Society may only restrict individual freedoms if the exercise of those freedoms brings demonstrable damage to others.

'The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. '[28]

The principle attempts to hold together the two types of freedom. On the one hand, the possibility that there might be a 'physical or moral' good of an individual is not denied. On the other hand, Mill steps back from allowing the state or other corporate authority to determine or influence this good.

However, by holding up 'harm' as the only case where intervention is warranted, Mill has not escaped succumbing to the highly individualistic nature of liberal freedom. Here again we see that 'liberty' can ultimately only mean that which does not coerce or restrain an individual. The general concept of 'harm' becomes difficult to articulate. Notoriously, the notion of harm is endlessly contestable – it has no morally neutral definition. For example, the right to suicide is considered by many liberals to belong to the sphere of individual freedom. However, it is arguably harmful to others if I kill myself. Not only do I set a precedent to the vulnerable, ill or elderly that their lives, too, are not worth living, I am also removing myself from the common life by withholding my contribution to society. Or, to take the example of the freely speaking racist, a typical liberal response is to allow the speech but intervene at the point of physical damage. Yet the cultural and psychic blot that bigotry makes in the communities where it exists is also damaging. The speakers, as well as the listeners, are hurt by racism even if it never leads to physical violence. Such arguments can only be made if a prior commitment to a narrative of human flourishing is in view, but it is precisely the sort of commitment that Millian liberals cannot make. By being reticent to name 'the good', Mill is also unable to name 'the harm'.[29]

Positive and negative freedom
Liberal politics necessitate a balancing act between the two types of freedom at work. In practical terms, liberal policy differentiates between 'negative' and 'positive' freedom. Negative freedom refers to the legal guarantee of private space from public interference. Negatively, the state agrees not to intrude. This corresponds most closely to autonomous 'freedom *from*' and to Mill's rule of harm, and as such it shares in the problems posed by those principles.

Positive freedom can refer to the ability to pursue long-term goals unhindered by ignorance or untutored passions and corresponds most closely to purposeful 'freedom *for*'. Attempts to legislate this sort of freedom are fraught with difficulties. A modern liberal government that actively seeks to educate its citizens regarding the good life is playing with the same fire that classical liberalism sought to put out. Common liberal debates in this area include discussing how many public resources should be used to supply the means by which individuals can reach self-fulfilment. How should education be provided and, crucially, what should educators teach? A perennial hot topic amongst Liberal Democrats is that of faith schooling. Should a liberal state provide funds for faith schools? Should it allow faith schools at all? If so, to what extent should liberal values be enforced in the curriculum of these schools?

Ultimately, secular liberalism is unable to answer these questions without falling afoul of one or some of its foundational premises. It is in the face of intractable problems such as these that liberal freedom is traditionally extended only as a matter of expanding the options of choice and no further. Positively, the liberal state provides the infrastructure and resources (for schools, hospitals and the like) that form the context of the choice – but it

refrains from helping its citizens to choose *well*. Here, the negative freedom ensured by the state comes into play. People may choose rightly or wrongly – all that matters is that they are free to choose.

By coming back to 'choice' as the end goal we can see that in the battle to keep both senses of freedom intact, in fact it is the autonomous freedom of the self-realised individual (freedom *from*) that ultimately must win out over 'freedom *for*' in liberalism. For those who value self-authorship above all else this is a point of commendation. For those who find freedom only where there is purposeful flourishing, it is a point of critique.

'Because freedom is granted to the sphere of conscience that does no harm to others, liberals have sought to allow others to be free to live out their own beliefs rather than impose their view on them. This has led to the compartmentalisation of life under liberalism: the separation of faith from the public square, and the secularisation in confining religion to one sphere and role in life. '[30]

Rather than enforcing a public life guided by overarching Christian (or other) principles, liberals tend to look to impersonal 'society' itself as a 'spontaneous and self-adjusting order'.[31] Thus it is true that with liberalism there is 'an absence of a positive unifying core for its social philosophy'.[32] This absence has contributed to very real and very bad problems in the modern, liberal West. However, considering the historical and present dangers posed by regimes enforcing their vision of 'the good' upon everyone else, liberalism may well turn out to be the least worst option. Certainly it is not necessary to liberalism that it must be opposed to Christianity. Indeed, Christians often make the best liberals. Christian communities can exist and thrive in liberal societies. Due to their non-reconcilable views of liberty, however, what they cannot expect is that modern liberal societies will be *Christian*.

This need not pose an insurmountable problem for the modern, politically liberal Christian. That no society can be *made* to be Christian, and indeed, that there is no such thing as a Christian society, only Christians within society, is itself a deep Christian truth. After all, if the God whose Spirit hovers over the free gift of Creation is also the Father of the incarnate Son, then no one will rightly relate to this God unless they do so as the free and liberated persons they were created to be.

Suggested Further Reading

- John Gray, 'Liberalism: An Autopsy' in John Gray, *Gray's Anatomy: Selected Writings* (Allen Lane, 2009).
- Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom* (Abingdon Press, 1999).
- David Bentley Hart, *Atheist Delusions: The Christian Revolution and its Fashionable Enemies* (Yale University Press, 2009).
- Stephen Charles Mott, *A Christian Perspective on Political Thought* (Oxford University Press, 1993).
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Oxford University Press, 1998).
- Shirley Williams, *God and Caesar: Personal Reflections on Politics and Religion* (Continuum, 2003).

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[1] This article draws on my *Experiments in Living: Christianity and the Liberal Democrat Party* (KLICE/Bible Society 2010).

[2] Paul Whiteley, Patrick Seyd and Anthony Billinghurst, *Third Force Politics: Liberal Democrats at the Grassroots* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 23-25.

[3] Interview with Nick Clegg, *Telegraph Magazine* (10 April 2010), 27.

[4] Orlando Patterson, *Freedom: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (I.B. Taurus, 1991), xvi.

[5] A. C. Grayling, *Towards the Light* (Bloomsbury, 2007), 8.

[6] Karl Barth, *Humanity of God* (Collins, 1971), 67.

[7] Barth, *Humanity*, 68.

[8] Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom* (Abingdon Press, 1999), 53.

[9] Immanuel Kant, *What is Enlightenment?* (1784).

[10] See for example Paul Marshall's introduction in *The Orange Book* (Profile Books, 2004), and David Boyle's essay 'Liberalism and the Search for Meaning' in *Reinventing the State*, edited by Duncan Brack et al (Politico's, 2007).

[11] David Bentley Hart, *Atheist Delusions: The Christian Revolution and its Fashionable Enemies* (Yale University Press, 2009), 5.

[12] See John Gray, 'Liberalism: An Autopsy' in *Gray's Anatomy: Selected Writings* (Allen Lane, 2009).

[13] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ* (1895), §16.

[14] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (1882), §125.

[15] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* (posthumous 1901).

[16] See, for example, Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1885).

[17] Terry Eagleton, *Reason, Faith and Revolution* (Yale University Press, 2009), 16.

[18] Wolfgang Pannenberg, *Christian Spirituality* (Westminster Press, 1983), 89-91.

[19] Nick Clegg, *A Stronger Economy and a Fairer Society: Enabling every person to get on in life*. Pre-Manifesto 2014 (Policy Paper 121, August 2014), 7.

[20] See *A Stronger Economy and a Fairer Society*.

[21] See Michael Ignatieff, *The Needs of Strangers* (Viking, 1985).

[22] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Unwin University Books, 1970), 182.

[23] Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, 183.

[24] Stephen Charles Mott, *A Christian Perspective on Political Thought* (Oxford University Press, 1993), 132.

[25] See www.theguardian.com/law/2014/dec/04/judge-rules-mother-not-guilty-of-for-drinking-while-pregnant

[26] *A Stronger Economy and a Fairer Society*, 40-45.

[27] www.libdems.org.uk/tax (2014)

[28] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 14.

[29] See Gray's introduction to *On Liberty* (Oxford University Press, 1998) and his essay 'Modus Vivendi' in his *Gray's Anatomy*, 47-48.

[30] Mott, *A Christian Perspective*, 144.

[31] Mott, *A Christian Perspective*, p.132. See also Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Princeton University Press, 1960).

[32] Mott, *A Christian Perspective*, p.144.