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978-1-107-00511-2 - On the People's Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy

Philip Pettit

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On the People's Terms

According to republican political theory, people's freedom as persons requires that they be publicly protected against subjection or domination in the exercise of basic liberties. But there is no public protection without a coercive state and that raises a problem since, by all accounts, coercion takes away from the freedom of the coerced. In addressing this problem, Philip Pettit argues that state coercion does not involve subjection or domination if people share equally in democratic control of the direction it takes. He proposes a normative theory of democracy under which the goal is to ensure that political coercion is non-dominating and, linking philosophy with policy, he supplements the theory with a realistic model of institutions that might promote that goal. *On the People's Terms* is an original account of the rationale and organization of democracy, offering a new direction for democratic thought. It fully lives up to the high ideals of the Seeley Lectures.

PHILIP PETTIT is L. S. Rockefeller University Professor of Politics and Human Values at Princeton University and also Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the Australian National University. His books include *The Common Mind*; *Republicanism*; *Rules, Reasons and Norms*; and *Made with Words: Hobbes on Language, Mind and Politics*. Amongst his recent co-authored books are *The Economy of Esteem*, with Geoffrey Brennan; *A Political Philosophy in Public Life*, with Jose Martí; and *Group Agency*, with Christian List. A collection of papers on his work, *Common Minds: Themes from the Philosophy of Philip Pettit*, appeared in 2007.

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For Rory and Owen, in another season.

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Acknowledgements

This book has been long in the making. I decided to give more attention to the relationship between republican political theory and democratic theory soon after publishing *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* in 1997 (Pettit 1997c) and I wrote some papers on the topic in the years immediately following. I worked at developing an overall view of republicanism and democracy in the Pufendorf Lectures in Philosophy at the University of Lund in 2005, in the Albertus Magnus Lectures in Philosophy at the University of Cologne in 2009 and, finally, in the Seeley Lectures in Political Theory at the University of Cambridge in 2010. I wrote up a final draft of the book while on a year's research leave at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford in 2010–11 and I reworked the text in the course of a graduate seminar in Philosophy and Politics at Princeton University in Fall Semester 2011. Late in the piece I presented related material in the Frankfurt Lectures in Political Theory at the Goethe University in Frankfurt, and in the Quain Lecture in Jurisprudence at University College, London, and the intense discussions on each occasion led to some final alterations. I am grateful to all those institutions for their support, as well as to the John Guggenheim Foundation for the award of a fellowship in 2010–11.

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¹ N. Kolodny, in his unpublished paper, 'Rule Over None: Social Equality and the Value of Democracy', offers an alternative way of developing some of the ideas that are basic to the approach taken in this book and this was a source of constant challenges as I prepared the final version of my own text.