

Terrorism Justified: Comment on Vicente Medina's
Terrorism Unjustified

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1. Introduction

Vicente Medina's *Terrorism Unjustified* offers a comprehensive, clear, and thorough critique of terrorism.¹ There's a sense in which I agree with and greatly admire Medina's argument, and a sense in which I fundamentally disagree with and reject it. In this paper, I'll focus on the disagreement, in the hopes that in doing so, the implicit agreement will come out as well.

I'll start in Section 2 with some critical observations on his definition of "terrorism." The definition, I suggest, pushes the reader in two different directions—a categorical rejection of terrorism, and a subtly conditional rejection. On the latter interpretation, terrorism can be justified, but only in situations that Medina regards as extremely implausible and unlikely. In Section 3, I'll offer an extended thought-experiment, verging on a fable, intended to give plausibility to one such situation. In other words, the case I describe will be one in which it seems (to me) justifiable to target people that Medina would regard

¹ Vicente Medina, *Terrorism Unjustified: The Use and Misuse of Political Violence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015). All references to the book in this symposium are by page numbers in parentheses.

as “innocent noncombatants,” or else to foresee harm to them without having to meet a “reasonable doubt” criterion as to their moral status. In Sections 4 and 5, I’ll make explicit what the fable leaves implicit.

2. Medina’s definition of “terrorism”

Though the book addresses a fair bit of complexity, the crux of Medina’s argument is straightforward, and proceeds in essence as follows: Even in warfare, innocent noncombatants enjoy categorical immunity from the deliberate or reckless infliction of substantive harm. Given this, all such harm is undeserved, and being undeserved, is always (or almost always) impermissible. Since the infliction even of foreseeable harm requires stringent protection for the innocent, foreseeable harm becomes reckless (hence impermissible) when inflicted on those who are not believed beyond a reasonable doubt to be guilty of some serious crime. Any attempt to flout one or both of these norms would be morally wrong; because terrorism flouts both, it is doubly wrong.

In a deeper sense, terrorism flouts the complex application of a single norm, the Principle of Double Effect, or alternatively, St. Paul’s principle that evil ought never to be done that good (or imagined good) may come. So while some individual terrorists may well be craven criminals or unhinged psychopaths, in a deeper and more fundamental sense, terrorism is a kind of teleology or consequentialism run wild: even at their best, terrorists are people unwilling to observe humanly decent limits on their promotion of justice or well-being.

Despite the extensive attempts made to rationalize or excuse it (Medina’s argument continues), terrorism stands condemned: like murder but unlike homicide or warfare, terrorism is always wrong; like the word “murder” and unlike the words “homicide” and “warfare,” the word “terrorism” should always be used, whether in legal or other contexts, to denote something morally impermissible and out of bounds. That said, our attempts to deal with terrorism ought themselves to be kept in bounds, lest they come to mimic the terrorism we oppose.

Medina formally defines terrorism as “the use of political violence by individuals or groups who, with the aim of influencing a domestic or an international audience, deliberately or recklessly inflict substantive undeserved harm or threaten to do so on those who can beyond reasonable doubt be conceived as innocent noncombatants.”² The definition, I think, aptly captures the essence of his argument. Four observations are worth making about the definition, and by implication, the argument for adopting it.

First, note that the genus of the definition is “*use of political violence.*” This genus is contestable from a variety of different perspectives. As Medina notes, feminist commentators have quarreled with the idea that terrorism is necessarily a use of *political* violence; perhaps domestic violence is a form of terrorism.³ One might also, in an age of cyberterrorism, quarrel with the idea that terrorism requires *violence*: it’s not clear that a virus-based computer shut-down is *violent*.

I would contest the idea that a definition of terrorism should describe it merely as *a* use of violence rather than an initiatory use. There is a fundamental moral difference between an initiatory use of violence and a response to one.⁴ That distinction is so fundamental (I would argue) that it ought to be the focus of an analysis of terrorism, and an explicit part of the definition of the term. In saying this, I don’t mean to suggest that Medina is unaware of the distinction, or that he ignores it in the book. I simply note for now that the distinction takes a back seat to other considerations.

Second, notice that the phrase “aim of influencing a domestic or an international audience” is neutral as between the *kinds* of messages that one might send through the use of violence. One kind of message might be termed dramatic or spectacular: one uses violence primarily to put on a kind of show for as-yet uninvolved third parties,

²Ibid, p. ix.

³Ibid, p. 62.

⁴ The distinction is most sharply insisted on by political libertarians, e.g., Ayn Rand, Murray Rothbard, Robert Nozick, and others. But one need not be a libertarian to regard the principle as fundamental.

in order to draw those third parties' attention to one's cause. But a very different kind of message might be termed defensive or deterrence-based: one uses violence in response to someone who has initiated that violence, the message being to cease and desist from it. Again, I don't mean to suggest that Medina's account contradicts this distinction. I mean that like the initiatory/retaliatory distinction, it takes a back seat to other things.

Third, as Medina himself recognizes in the third and fourth chapters of the book, the criteria for someone's being an "innocent noncombatant" are highly contestable. Hence someone might well accept Medina's definition of "terrorism" but reject his account of who qualifies as an "innocent combatant." Such a person would in one sense agree, and in another sense disagree, with Medina's account.

Finally, someone might accept that innocent noncombatants enjoy immunity against *deliberate* harm-infliction, but think (like Medina himself) that innocent noncombatants do not enjoy immunity against *foreseeable* harm-infliction. Such a person might quarrel with the idea that the relevant standard for foreseeably inflicting harm is the juridical one Medina embeds in his definition—guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt."⁵ This critic might well agree that while we ought not to target "impeccably innocent" civilians,⁶ we can, in targeting others, resign ourselves to harming innocent civilians as long as we foresee rather than intend the harm that befalls them. We need not be able to distinguish the guilty from the innocent "beyond a reasonable doubt," however: juridical standards (the critic might continue) apply in courtrooms, not battlefields. Battlefields require battle-appropriate standards, and "certainty beyond a reasonable doubt" is not feasibly applied there. So a lesser standard will do.

So far, none of these observations, whether individually or jointly, adds up to a full-blown criticism of Medina's argument; they're all just observations offered more or less in passing. Jointly, however,

⁵ On reasonable doubt, see Medina, *Terrorism Unjustified*, pp. 24, 59, 84, and 200.

⁶ On "impeccably innocent civilians," see Medina, *Terrorism Unjustified*, pp. 13, 67-68, 74, 89, 114, 159, 166, and 205-6.

they do draw attention to a possibility that Medina either overlooks or underplays, and that I regard as a counter-example to his view.

What if there was a form of political violence with the following features?

- It was a retaliatory response to someone else's initiated violence.
- The message it sent was intended primarily for the initiators of that violence, and primarily told them to cease and desist.
- It inflicted harm on a population whose members were a complex combination of guilty and innocent people.
- The culpable substantially outnumbered the innocent.
- Only the guilty were targeted for harm, but
- Instead of satisfying a "reasonable doubt" standard, targets were selected on the basis of a strong probability that the culpable would be harmed, treating collateral damages as foreseen rather than intended.
- The covert intermingling of guilty and innocent in the target population was part of the strategy of aggression itself.
- The only option faced by the victims was to enact the preceding strategy, or face subjugation and possible extermination.

The conditions in the preceding list are difficult, perhaps impossible to imagine in the abstract. They might also appear to be a contrived collection of claims artificially designed to produce a counter-example to Medina's view. I disagree. In the next section, I offer an extended thought-experiment designed to illustrate what they would look like in just *one* of the sorts of case that exemplify them— asymmetric warfare against an imperialist aggressor.⁷ In this case, and cases like them, I suggest, terrorism is justified.

⁷ Another case would be that of strategic or area bombing against a totalitarian aggressor. Though I lack the space to develop the point, much of what I say

3. Asymmetric warfare against an imperialist aggressor: a thought-experiment

Imagine that you live in a place where your ancestors have lived since time immemorial. Suppose that one day newcomers arrive on your shores, and conquer you by force: they kill you, rape you, rob you, kidnap you, torture you, and demand your subservience, on pain of repeating the process until you get the message. Suppose that you somehow manage to get hold of their playbook, and it turns out to be a bastardized version of the first few chapters of Machiavelli's *Prince*.⁸ In particular, your conquerors espouse "Machiavelli's" advice on the right way to consolidate a conquest, and on the correct attitude to have in political life toward morality and justice.

On the first issue, conquest, Machiavelli has two pieces of advice. The first is the valorization of conquest itself: conquest is a good thing, morally and practically. Morally, it brings the conqueror glory; practically, it brings him spoils. At a deep metaphysical level, conquest is man's way of conquering or taming the vicissitudes of fortune.

His second point is strategic. A conqueror must first ascertain whether the conquered people are fundamentally similar to the conquerors--culturally, ethnically, linguistically, religiously--or different from them.

in defense of this sort of case of terrorism might also be said, with appropriate changes, in defense of area bombing against a totalitarian aggressor who puts his own civilians in harms' way, and (many of) whose civilians support his aggressive projects. See Medina's index entries for "area bombing," as well as "Bennett, Jonathan" (both on Medina, *Terrorism Unjustified*, p. 276), as well as the discussion of "supreme emergency" (Ibid, pp. 170-85).

⁸ See Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (New York: Modern Library, 1950), with Introduction by Max Lerner, chapters 1-7, but particularly chapter 3. I should emphasize that the reading I offer in the text is not intended as an accurate exegesis of *The Prince*, but of an ideological reading intended to rationalize conquest. The reading I offer is in the spirit of Leo Strauss's *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958) without explicitly relying on it. See also Peter Breiner, "Machiavelli's 'New Prince' and the Primordial Moment of Acquisition," *Political Theory*, vol. 36:1 (2008), pp. 66-92.

Suppose in this case that the two peoples are fundamentally different from one another. If so (Machiavelli continues), the optimal method of conquest is to colonize the conquered people in such a way as to fragment the land they hold and make political unity among them impossible. In other words, the prince is advised first to consolidate his conquest, and then to import civilians from his home country, arming at least some of them, and planting them within the conquered country. Doing so fragments the indigenous population, undermining its unity. It also surrounds them with paramilitary forces that keep them constantly in fear. Given the nearly universal taboo on attacking civilians, the settlers can then be declared immune from attack. Those who attack them are demonized as enemies of humanity; their attacks, in turn, become a pretext for intensified militarization.

As an auxiliary measure (Machiavelli continues), it helps to place the capital of one's country within the conquered territory, in part to keep the conquered people under surveillance, and in part to solidify the sense that the conquered land is part of the conqueror's original inheritance. In other words, the conqueror regards himself as making a mythological "return" to a place that was always his. He makes sure to import civilians susceptible to this belief.

On the second issue, the conqueror's playbook announces that it's better to *appear* to be just and moral than to *be* so. Conquest is not easily compatible with the principles of justice; justice is both an obstacle to the act of conquest, and to the task of maintaining it. So justice has to be dispensed with, but in a clever way. It would be silly of a conqueror to repudiate justice explicitly. It makes more sense for the prince to be seen as sincerely committed to justice despite his lack of commitment. The best way to do so would be to treat justice as a default position from which deviation is always (or often) permissible. In this way, the prince may well succeed in convincing himself (or at least half-convincing oneself) of his commitment to justice, and in so doing, fully or almost fully convincing others.⁹

The exact status of the imported "civilian" population is somewhat tricky. At a basic level, they are there to effectuate a deliberate, explicit plan of conquest under that very description. As a

⁹ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chaps. 15-18.

matter of knowledge, some may know this, others may not. Of those who know it, some may know it explicitly, and others may know it tacitly. Of those who know it tacitly, some may be uneasily and evasively aware of it but in denial, while others may just be dimly aware. As a matter of promoting the ends of the conquest, some may be willing and eager participants; others may participate, but only when called upon to do so; and some may be reluctant or even averse participants, pushed into the project through duress or coercion. As time passes, new generations will arise in these colonies, and in different ways, the preceding considerations will come to apply to them. But each generation's decision about how to transmit its knowledge and roles to future generations will involve a series of choices. Unless the settlers are literally lost in amnesia, they will not be able to forget the significance of their presence in a foreign place.

We have no good vocabulary for characterizing the complicity of the "civilian" part of the project of conquest. Some may be innocent shields, some may be culpable shields, and some may more accurately be described as spears or spear-points than shields. *Ex hypothesi*, a substantial number of them are *somehow* complicitous in the project of conquest. I would simply insist that *to the extent* that they are complicitous in a project of conquest, they are *not* "impeccably innocent."¹⁰

The prince knows all of this. Adhering to no consistent principle or policy of his own, but claiming to do so, he loudly declares that while he expects some resistance from the conquered people—he isn't naive, after all—he expects that whatever resistance they mount ought at least to satisfy certain civilized moral constraints. Among these is non-combatant immunity. Only savages, he says, would treat the colonizing population as a single, undifferentiated unit, or regard

¹⁰ My terminology here is influenced by Robert Nozick's in *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), pp. 33-35. See also Nozick's "War, Terrorism, Reprisals—Drawing Some Moral Lines," in *Socratic Puzzles* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), especially p. 303, where he criticizes Michael Walzer for paying "insufficient attention to the way guerillas exploit the morality of those they attack." In my view, both Walzer and Nozick pay insufficient attention to the ways in which imperialists exploit the morality of those they invade.

every member of that unit equally as a target. Civilized resisters would differentiate between targets. Indeed, a genuinely civilized, gentlemanly resister, equal to the conqueror in honor, would insist on pursuing the most difficult targets. Morally speaking, an honorable resister would either choose to target strictly military targets, or choose the noblest path of all, the path of non-violence. The prince fails to note the (*ex hypothesi*) obvious: if the conquered population attacks strictly military targets, it is sure to be defeated; if it practices non-violence, it is sure to be subjugated.

Eventually, a second playbook is discovered. This playbook sounds a lot like Locke's *Second Treatise*, retrofitted for the use of a Machiavellian prince.¹¹ This second playbook gives the prince the language of natural rights, alerting him to the utility of appeals to this language. He quickly comes to learn that if he dresses the imperatives of conquest in the language of rights, things go more smoothly than they might otherwise have done: the language of rights seems to work on the relevant people like a weird sort of charm.

Granted, adoption of this language requires that the prince recognize such phenomena as “aggression,” that he repudiate any reliance on it, that he endorse the notion of a “right of self-defense,” and that he pledge to exercise this right of self-defense only against aggressors, and in a proportionate rather than disproportionate fashion. But this isn't much of a problem for him. After all, the playbook offers no determinate account of any of these things. And a well-educated

¹¹ John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), ed. Peter Laslett. As with my use of Machiavelli, the use I make of Locke here is not intended as an accurate exegesis of Locke; it's intended as the sort of ideological reading of Locke that might be offered by an imperialist. For readings of this ideological sort, see Barbara Arneil, *Locke and America: The Defence of English Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), and Craig Yirush, *Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), and Alasdair MacIntyre, "Community, Law, and the Idiom and Rhetoric of Rights," *Listening: A Journal of Religion and Culture*, vol. 26 (1991), pp. 96-110. Also suggestive is Marx's discussion of “primitive accumulation” in *Capital*. See Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (New York: Penguin, 1992), tr. Ben Fowkes, Vol. I, Part 8, pp. 873-942.

Machiavellian prince is smart enough to exploit the semantic indeterminacy of such open-textured, coarse-grain, highly contested concepts for the purpose of maintaining an occupation.

The “Lockean” playbook has a few more features. For one thing, it has a theory of property. It says that we all have natural rights to property which we acquire by labor—our own, and that of our servants.¹² We acquire property in land by a process of initial acquisition. This process, of course, comes with constraints. A person can appropriate land for his own use, but only if he intends to improve it rather than waste it, and only if he leaves “enough and as good” for others. Apart from a few primitive and archaic (but politically useful) examples, the playbook contains no account of the criteria for improvement, waste, or leaving enough and as good. It turns out that the prince has his own criteria for all of these things; as it happens, the indigenous population's real estate holdings fail all of the relevant criteria.

From the prince's perspective, the indigenes are a profligate, irrational, and licentious bunch of people: having improved nothing for generations, having wasted huge tranches of natural resources, and having taken far too much for either their own or anyone else's good, they sit on land and water that they stubbornly claim to be theirs, won't allow the settlers to use, and defend with violence. Clearly, these resources have to be taken from them in the name of justice and human progress—no easy task, but one that just happens perfectly to cohere with the colonizing project that the prince had earlier conceived.

There's one last set of claims in this quasi-Lockean playbook. It says, paradoxically enough, that conquest is prohibited. More precisely, it says that *aggressive* conquest is prohibited, but *defensive* conquest is a different thing. And obviously, when you confront someone who unjustly holds huge quantities of real estate that they won't share with you, they're the aggressor. So in that case, odd as it sounds, defensive conquest is legitimate.

¹² A Machiavellian-Lockean regime won't have slaves. It may have a few people who have sold themselves into *drudgery*, but as Locke insists (*Second Treatise*, chapter IV), drudgery isn't slavery.

There is one last proviso in the Lockean playbook: defensive conquest is conquest of territory, not of goods. When you conquer a territory defensively, you're not allowed to loot and plunder the inhabitants. You're only permitted to govern the inhabitants by putting down insurrections, but permitting them to keep what's justly theirs. More precisely, you can permit them to keep what's justly theirs minus any expenses you may have incurred in conquering them. "What's theirs minus expenses" ought to be small in most cases, and leave them with plenty of stuff to hold onto.

Of course, as the Versailles Settlement suggests, "smallness" is a contestable concept: what Clemenceau regarded as small Keynes regarded as large, and the Weimar rulers regarded as even larger (to say nothing of the Nazis). But in a way, the whole issue of what's "theirs minus the expenses of conquest" is moot. Recall that by Lockean strictures, the holdings of indigenous, conquered inhabitants were illegitimate in the first place. The proviso under discussion says that when a prince conquers a territory, he's not allowed to loot and plunder the inhabitants—assuming that the inhabitants genuinely own something! If they don't, the prince's problem is solved: he can't be looting what never belonged to anyone in the first place. Whatever resistance he meets can then be construed as theft. He is making property of what was hitherto unowned; they are attacking his productive efforts in an attempt to steal it. How else does one deal with a society of robbers but by force?

Suppose you learn all of this about your conqueror—the whole brutal, cynical truth laid out in two treatise-length volumes of Pentagon Papers-like detail. Now suppose that you canvass your options. Inaction is not a feasible option: while it may not bring "imminent" genocide, it would bring subjugation, and resistance to the intended subjugation is just a few steps away from genocide. A conventional attack on your adversary's combat troops would lead to certain defeat: the weaker party can't compete on the same grounds as the stronger one. An attempt to target all and only the culpable parties while sparing the innocent by the standard of certainty beyond a reasonable doubt is made impossible by the *deliberate strategy* of the prince. He has set things up so that you *can't* apply it, and done so just for that reason. You try good-faith negotiations, but they fail. What else would you

expect of negotiations with a Machiavellian leader? You try to appeal to justice of those who are “impeccably innocent.” But this doesn’t work. Some of them are inaccessible to you; some are too suspicious to grant you a hearing; some are coldly indifferent to your plight; and the rest are powerless to make the sort of change that counts.

You settle, then, on the following strategy. You find targets that are accessible to you, that minimize your own casualties, and that inflict casualties on your conqueror. Your attacks are intended to send a message: cease and desist. You pick “civilian” targets, but do so in the knowledge that many of these “civilians” are armed combatants, while many others, whether overtly armed or not, are culpably complicitous in the conquest. Indeed, as time passes, the ratio of culpable to non-culpable changes in your favor: very few people can non-culpably be ignorant of the fact that they are part of a plan of conquest. You pick targets where it is likely that the guilty will congregate, in the knowledge that the targets will vary in culpability from completely culpable to impeccably innocent. The longer they spend in conquering you, the fewer can be presumed innocent, and the more the innocent can be regarded as the responsibility of the conquerors who brought them there in the first place. Every passing day enables your conqueror to consolidate and normalize his conquest. Your strategy merely aims to undo what he’s done.

You acknowledge the impossibility of being certain beyond a reasonable doubt that your targets are all or even mostly guilty. You hope that they are, and do the best that you can to ensure it. But you justify your uncertainty by telling yourself that you are fighting a war, not arguing a legal case. You are facing a ruthless, deceitful conqueror, not facing a jury of your peers. You didn’t put yourself in this situation; he did. You wouldn’t have chosen to be in this situation; you’re in it because he *put* you in it. If you could run, you would. But you can’t even do that.

You’ve read the conqueror-prince’s playbook, and as far as you’re concerned, in dealing with him, guilt and innocence do not track the conventional distinction between combatant and non-combatant (or “civilian”). They track the distinction between *those who know the playbook strategy and/or are culpably ignorant of it*, and *those who are non-culpably ignorant of it or are aware of it but non-culpably*

present in the conquered land without viable means of escape. The latter category, you conclude, are innocent shields and hostages of the first. But the first category includes harmless-looking free riders on the conquest—people who cash in on conquest but refuse to fight. It's terrible to have kill them both without knowing which is which. But maybe the prince should have thought of that before he invaded.

4. What the thought-experiment shows (and doesn't show)

My thought-experiment is easy to misunderstand, so let me clarify a few things about it, starting with what it was *not* meant to say or imply.

First, the Machiavellian-Lockean “playbook” I described is *not* meant to be a description of Medina's theory. Medina's theory is a critique of terrorism; the playbook is a rationalization of imperial conquest. The two things have nothing to do with each other.

Nor is it meant to be an objective or accurate account of either Machiavelli or Locke (or their combination). It's meant to be an extended description of a plausible ideological misuse of both Machiavelli and Locke in the service of imperial conquest.

Nor is it meant to describe some actual or historical situation. It's intended as a hypothetical account, not an account of some actual or actualized state of affairs.

Nor is it meant to be an entirely realistic account of how conquest works. It's unlikely that any real-life conqueror would translate “Machiavelli” or “Locke” directly into practice. It's also unlikely that he would describe his plans as cynically and explicitly as my hypothetical prince does. Even if he did, it's unlikely that the conquered population would get access to those plans. Further, it's unlikely that any real-life resistance movement would operate as deliberately or without malice as mine does, or face a situation as clearly delineated as mine is. The real world is more complex than anything I've described.

That said, the thought-experiment is not pure fantasy, either. Machiavelli and Locke, among many others, have been read and used

as I've described. Conquests have taken place that at least approximate what I've described. Playbooks of conquest have been written and published, some remarkably candid—and sometimes, such playbooks do find their way into enemy hands. And while no real-life resistance movement would operate exactly as my thought-experimental one does, no real-life counter-terrorist operation operates exactly as Medina recommends, either. So while hypothetical, my thought-experiment is within the realm of realistic possibility.

By Medina's standards, my resistance operation is a terrorist operation. While its operatives do not deliberately target impeccably innocent civilians (at least not *qua* innocent, under that description), they recklessly inflict harm on the innocent without knowing beyond a reasonable doubt whether their targets are guilty or innocent. Put another way, they gamble with the lives of the innocent in the hopes of either hitting the guilty or sending the guilty a message.

My thought-experiment is designed, at length, to give a plausible reason for their doing so: "terrorism" is, in a case like this, the only viable means of resistance against injustice. The thought-experiment is as long and detailed as it is because (as I see it) the details give added plausibility to the idea that "terrorism," or something like it, is justified in this sort of case. What is essential to the case is not just that the victims are facing the terrible injustice of conquest, but that the victims are forced, in resistance, to target civilians *precisely because their conqueror wants it that way*. The details help explain why.

5. Conclusion

If my thought-experiment works, it offers a counterexample to Medina's claim that terrorism is categorically wrong. In cases like the one I describe, either terrorism is not *always* wrong, or there are justifiable forms of warfare that closely resemble terrorism without quite counting as terrorism. Personally, I prefer the latter conclusion,

but given the argument of *Terrorism Unjustified*, I doubt Medina would be content with either. I'm eager to consider his response.¹³

¹³ Thanks to Alison Bowles, Anas Mashni, Awad Mansour, Sari Nusseibeh, David Riesbeck, Michael Young, and my students and colleagues at Felician University (Rutherford, New Jersey), Al Quds University (Abu Dis, Palestinian Territories), and Forman Christian College and University (Lahore, Pakistan) for helpful conversation on the issues discussed here. Thanks likewise to Shawn Klein and Carrie-Ann Biondi for agreeing to publish the symposium, and for the hard work they put into editing it. Thanks above all to Vicente Medina, both for writing the book and for doing us the honor of participating in this Author-Meets-Critics symposium at Felician University that led to this published version of the symposium in *Reason Papers*.

None of the preceding individuals is responsible for anything I say here, and nothing I say should be construed as incitement to any criminal act. In compliance with a request made by the President and Academic Vice President of Felician University, I assert explicitly that the views I defend in this paper are exclusively my own, and do not represent the views of Felician University. My institutional affiliation is listed for purposes of identification, rather than to claim official status of any kind.