

Liberalism, Pluralism and Education

Ph. D Thesis, Submission 02/08/10

University of York, Department of Politics

Timothy Michael Fowler

Abstract

The thesis is an investigation into the proper way a liberal education system should respond to the diversity of opinions that are held in modern societies. The work primarily engages with the philosophy of John Rawls as laid out in his book Political Liberalism. The first section of the thesis defends Rawls' account from its most prominent critics. In particular, I defend Rawls' response to pluralism. Following this, I analyse the application of political liberalism to education. This reveals a serious problem with Rawls' account: while Rawls responds fairly to pluralism in the case of adults, his model fails to consider the implications of education for children themselves. I develop this objection into an internal problem for Rawls' theory by showing that children must be counted as full members of the community, which means they cannot be ignored when considering issues of legitimacy. I show that political liberalism, as defended by Rawls, is blind to the effects of different schemes of education on the welfare of children. In light of this, I show that children could reasonably reject Rawls' account; a conclusion which renders Rawls' model illegitimate.

The thesis thus shows that political liberalism fails to deal adequately with the case of education. Further, this case study reveals internal problems with the theory that go beyond the particular example of education. After highlighting this problem, I propose a modification to Rawls' account which can both better respond to the case of education and remain faithful to the core goals of political liberalism. My account is less deferential to parents' wishes than is Rawls' model, but it does not depend on one contested view of the good life.

Acknowledgements

Writing a PhD has been both the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life. It would not have been possible without generous funding from the University of York. I would also like to thank the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain for funding my final year, and the Worldwide Universities Network for funding my research trip to Madison, Wisconsin.

Throughout the PhD I have been lucky enough to have worked with a number of accomplished academics. Foremost thanks go to my supervisor Matt Matravers for his Herculean efforts in producing a coherent and readable thesis from an assorted collection of my jumbled notes. I'm also deeply indebted to Susan Mendus, for a series of invaluable comments about my work, a seemingly never ending wealth of understanding about the wider subject and for a rather pricey cocktail on the 95th floor of the Hancock building in Chicago. I must also thank Harry Brighouse at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a chance meeting at a conference which led to one of the most exciting few months of my life during my trip to America and many much appreciated discussions about my work. I'd also like to thank all of the political philosophy group at York, who manage to sustain a genuine community of like minded individuals which I have treasured being a part of.

While the academic community I was lucky enough to be part of was both stimulating and entertaining, during my time at York I met a number of other people who made the experience so enjoyable. I'd like to thank Sam Thomas and Louise Williams, running in to whom during my first week I consider to be a stroke of luck akin to a lottery win. Through them I met too many people to mention here, much as I would like to, but suffice to say I will miss you all. I'd also like to thank the residents of 37 Milton Street for tolerating my gradually declining mental state in my writing up year and for somehow managing to keep my spirits high these past few months.

Lastly, I'd like to thank my parents. If I write with any knowledge about a valuable upbringing and education it is because of time spent in their care.

Contents

Section 1 –Liberalism and Pluralism

Introduction-5

Chapter 1 - The Purposes of Education- 16

Chapter 2 - Liberal Perfectionism and Value Pluralism- 34

Chapter 3 - The Normative Basis of Political Liberalism- 57

Section 2- Understanding Political Liberalism in education

Chapter 4 - Parental Authority in Political Liberalism-84

Chapter 5 -The Requirements of Civic Education-106

Section 3-Justice to Children

Chapter 6 - Liberal Legitimacy and Children-130

Chapter 7-Justification to Children-152

Section 4 -A Neutral Defence of Liberal Education

Chapter 8-Acquiring a Conception of the Good-175

Chapter 9-Flourishing in a Liberal Society-202

Conclusions-217

Bibliography-225

Introduction

The mission statement of the English national curriculum begins with the assertion that 'Education influences and reflects the values of society, and the kind of society we want to be. It is important, therefore, to recognise a broad set of common purposes, values and aims that underpin the school curriculum and the work of schools.'(Qualifications and curriculum authority: 2009). To meet this requirement the English education system aims to 'promote the, spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners within society' and to 'prepare learners for the opportunities responsibilities and experiences of adult life' (ibid).

Stated in these broad terms, this understanding of the role and purpose of education seems to be beyond reproach. Yet contained within these seemingly innocuous statements is a problem of the utmost importance for any theorist concerned with education. The writers of the English curriculum are absolutely right when they note that education is both a product of what society is and an influence on what it is to become. However, taking seriously the kind of society we live in today might undermine the ability to pursue those goals laid out in the Act. Namely, creating a national curriculum, based on shared values, designed to promote the welfare of children.

The most relevant feature of modern liberal societies for political theorising is that they are characterised by permanent, deep and often hostile disagreement. Citizens differ substantially on a whole range of matters ranging from political outlook, to lifestyle, to religious conviction. Hard-line 'new wave' atheists co-exist with fundamentalist followers of many hundreds of different faiths; libertine free spirits live in the same neighbourhoods as prudish puritans.

Education in liberal democracies reflects this pluralism through the provision of a diverse range of different types of schools and other educational institutions. In both the US and the UK, faith based groups run significant numbers of schools. They are joined by a wide variety of independent organisations, often with unique missions targeting specific sections of society. Both countries offer publicly funded

schools which are free at the point of use but also have numerous different private schools funded directly by parents. Home schooling is a significant phenomenon in many countries, which implies that for these countries there is a significant minority of children who never attend school at all. The result of this is that in liberal democracies the content of what is taught at school, as well as the environment in which children learn differs enormously for children of different backgrounds.

As well as being shaped by the diversity in society, educational institutions are a significant influence on the nature of pluralistic societies. Education is one of the principal ways in which citizens first come to experience our diverse society. It therefore plays an important role in the development of their views on the many questions which divide the community. Given this central importance it should be of no surprise that many different groups within society seek to influence the nature of educational institutions. A good example is offered by Charles Taylor who draws attention to the Quebecois demand for 'la survivance' (Taylor, 58-59: 1992). This group advocates compulsory teaching of the French language to children born in the province. In this way, one aspect of pluralism in Canada, the distinction between Anglophonic and Francophone communities, is not only reflected in education but is actively maintained by it. A consideration of education thus shows that 'the fact of pluralism' is not simply one to be dealt with or responded to, but rather one whose precise character or nature is the result of how we choose to design our common institutions and the principles by which they are governed.

While the appreciation of education's relevance to wider society is important, it is also the source of the difficulty in determining the aims of education, as stated at the outset. Recognising the importance of pluralism complicates the aims of schools as laid out in the Education Act. In a society in which there is no consensus on matters of the good it is difficult to determine what is in the spiritual or moral best interests of children. For some citizens, children's spiritual interests are furthered by engendering in them a respect for all faiths and an appreciation of the common ground between them. For others, such an education would be

offensive, particularly to those who demand the right to educate their children in the tenets of only one faith. Contrasted to both of these cases are some atheists who might believe that educating children in any religious matters at all is abhorrent. For instance, in his recent popular work *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins describes some, rather extreme, cases of teaching religion to children as tantamount to child abuse (Dawkins, 2007: 318).

Likewise, while the national curriculum aims at teaching children their civic responsibilities, there is little agreement in society as to what the content of such civic education should be. The national curriculum lists a responsibility to respect the environment and the interests of future generations. Even these broad goals will be subject to objections from some sections of society, who might feel that the natural world can be used in whatever manner humankind sees fit. This difficulty is exacerbated when one attempts to consider the practical questions of how best children should pursue these goals. So called 'deep greens' believe that we can only respect the environment by living a radically more ascetic and locally focussed life than we do at present, for others we respect the environment best by taking account of carbon emissions in our market purchases, whilst some citizens deny the existence of global warming entirely. Advancing even this relatively modest set of civic aims will thus require taking a position in ongoing discussions about climate change and the role of manmade pollution.

The interaction of the goals of education with the fact of pluralism offers up two distinct challenges for both policy makers, concerned with these issues, and political philosophers. The first is that the values and beliefs inculcated through education might reflect just one of the many different views held in society. Moreover, this would most likely be the views of those who are politically and culturally dominant. A common education policy thus risks becoming a vehicle for the illegitimate imposition of the views of one group within a society onto the society as a whole. The other danger is essentially the reverse: it is that in trying to avoid taking a stand on any of the contested issues in a pluralistic society, education policy will become vacuous and ineffective. The challenge for philosophers is thus to show how a meaningful set of education policies can be

justified while taking seriously the reality of pluralism and the claims of all groups in society.

Avoiding both these possible problems has proven extremely difficult for liberal theorists. Indeed, I will argue that each of the leading contemporary accounts is undermined by one of these two issues. So called 'perfectionist' responses, which aim to use education to promote one conception of the 'good life' fall foul of the first difficulty. Their strategy privileges one set of answers to the questions that divide society, and thus illegitimately foists these views upon other citizens, who may quite reasonably dissent. Given the force of this objection, and the fact that it results from basic features of the perfectionist view, I will reject this strategy as a means of confronting the issues of education in the context of pluralism.

Instead, I will focus on the strategy of so called political liberals, who respond to pluralism within the framework developed by John Rawls. I will argue that this framework represents the most appropriate response to the wider circumstances of pluralism. However, I will also attempt to show that political liberalism¹, as defended by Rawls, faces a serious problem when we consider the case study of education. This problem is the second one that I alluded to above, namely, that by taking seriously the fact of reasonable pluralism political liberalism is committed to an education the content of which will be empty and ineffectual.

In response to these worries, my thesis is an attempt to show how a defensible theory of the role and goals of education can be incorporated into the political liberal framework. In doing this, the thesis also demonstrates a failing in the existing understanding of political liberalism and provides an account of how to rectify the position, and thus a better understanding of this popular and important theory of contemporary liberal politics.

To adumbrate the problem for political liberalism, I show that no sensible schema of education can ignore the welfare of children. The consequence of this is that political liberalism must take a position on contested questions of both human

¹ The term political liberalism refers to both the 1993 text by John Rawls as well as the theoretical position which was developed following its publication. In this thesis, the italicised *Political Liberalism* will refer to the text itself, whereas 'political liberalism' refers to the wider position.

good and our place in the world. I argue that this need not undermine the commitment to neutrality which defines this approach. Suitably understood, the commitment to liberal neutrality is compatible with two broad aims of education. The first is to aim to ensure children hold a plausible comprehensive view of the world and their place in it. The second is to give children skills that will enable them to succeed in pursuing their plan of life, a plan which will be informed by their comprehensive doctrine.

The thesis is thus relevant both to the specifics of the education debate and to debates concerning pluralism more generally. For educational theorists, the thesis covers how pluralism might present a problem to their theories, shows why several common strategies out of this problem will fail, and then offers a different solution. My own account of education will justify many of the policies advocated by other leading education theorists, such as Harry Brighouse, Adam Swift and Eamonn Callan. This includes policies such as increasing the amount of time children spend learning about political and moral problems, and exclusively teaching scientific theories such as evolution rather than religiously motivated alternatives. More broadly, the thesis is a defence of the notion that all children should have to go to school and that at school they must learn about views of the world which are not shared by their parents or community. While I do not delve specifically into the educational arrangements which might meet the criteria I lay out, the thesis is clearly relevant to the ongoing debates over cases such as *Mozert vs Hawkins* and *Wisconsin vs Yoder*.

To theorists interested in wider debates about pluralism, I believe that the education case sheds light on important aspects of these questions which would otherwise go unnoticed. The case of education is unique in liberal society, since while we can assume adults already have a comprehensive view of some sort, children's views are in the process of being formed. Consideration of the case of education thus forces consideration of how the liberal state can legitimately affect the development of comprehensive views, and what obligations it may have to show views are developed in a certain way.

The conclusions that follow from a more detailed consideration of the case of education force significant changes in the way political liberalism is conceived and in the architecture of this theory. Two such changes will be especially significant. The first is that we must consider children to be citizens of society when considering issues of the justification of the use of state power. Children are directly affected, albeit in different ways, by our policy decisions and by the design of political institutions. Thus, counting children as citizens will have important ramifications for the practical implications of political liberal principles.

The second significant change advocated by the thesis is that political liberal institutions cannot hope to be justified in a way that is entirely freestanding from debates about the good. This might seem to be a familiar critique in that a similar claim is made by theorists who argue that strict neutrality is impossible. However, unlike these critics, my argument is not that neutrality over questions of the good is impossible, but rather that it is undesirable. I argue that the goal of remaining freestanding leads inescapably to an education policy which fails to address children's interests, and which is thereby open to a serious objection. In its place, I propose that the justification of institutions must be made compatible with the tenets of each comprehensive doctrine. In this way, citizens can accept liberal principles without abandoning the core commitments of their comprehensive doctrine. This broader convergence between liberalism and the other views held in society is what made this approach an attractive theory to deal with the broader questions posed by pluralistic society.

Chapter summary

The argument of the thesis is structured into four sections. In section one, the first chapter reviews the existing literature that deals with what the content of a legitimate education system in a pluralistic liberal society. I divide this body of work into two broad camps, those who favour using education to promote autonomy, and those who focus on the civic aims of education. 'Education for autonomy' covers theorists such as Harry Brighouse and Joel Feinberg. While these theorists have very different proposals for education, they are linked by the

view that education ought to promote the development of the children in its care. Just as in the National Curriculum, this goal implies that the state must take a position on what is in children's best interests, which has important connotations for the way a liberal society deals with pluralism.

By contrast, the approach of 'education for citizenship' avoids the state taking a position on matters of the good. This strategy derives from the account laid out by John Rawls in his *Political Liberalism* (Rawls, 1993). In education, the implications of political liberalism are fleshed out by theorists such as Stephen Macedo and Eamonn Callan. The review thus highlights the extent to which our response to practical questions of education is driven by deep theoretical issues relating to the proper justification and role of liberal principles.

The second chapter considers the first of the two strategies I outlined in chapter one, which I term 'education for autonomy'. It argues that this strategy is the educational implication of liberal perfectionism, a theory most notably developed by Joseph Raz. I show that Raz views pluralistic society in a very different way from Rawls. While Rawls conceptualises society in terms of the fact of reasonable pluralism, Raz relies on the theory of value pluralism. I assess the merits of this theory, and through a review of Raz's arguments, I show that a reliance on value pluralism is not a useful way of characterising pluralism, especially in the religious case. Following this, I show that the theory of value pluralism is also a fundamental premise in one of the leading accounts of education for autonomy, which is thus rejected on this basis.

Following the rejection of education for autonomy, in the third chapter I consider the theory of 'education for citizenship'. The chapter consists of a defence and clarification of political liberal principles. I first consider two different ways in which the fact of reasonable pluralism might lead to a defence of liberal neutrality. These are stability and epistemology. Both of these accounts are rejected. In their place, I argue that the best defence of political liberalism is explicitly moral. The need to make liberalism free standing in circumstances of pluralism derives from a view about the legitimate basis of political authority and the most appropriate

terms for debate between citizens of a democratic society. This line of defence has important implications for the rest of the project, since it defines the scope and structure of political liberal principles.

The second section is entitled 'Understanding Political liberalism in Education'. In this section I spell out the implications of political liberal principles for the case of education. This ongoing argument has two parts. In chapter four I show why under political liberal principles, parents² will have a free hand in deciding the non-political aspects of their child's education. They will thus be the primary influence on the development of their child's comprehensive view. Significantly, this consequence does not depend on a view about parental rights, and is thus independent of recent discussions concerning the grounding of parent's authority and the importance of the family. At most, rejecting a strong conception of parental rights would simply imply some other adults would have to take the lead in shaping the development of the children. Given the political liberal eschewal of any theory of the good, schools cannot promote any conception of non-political education. This view is the direct implication of key features of political liberalism, specifically the notion of legitimacy and the quest for stability for the right reasons.

Given the arguments outlined in chapter four, it follows that the limits on parental choices are only that parents raise reasonable and fully co-operating citizens. In chapter five, I explore the implications of these limits in light of claims made by Amy Gutmann and Eamonn Callan who suggest that the requirements of reasonableness have strong non-political implications. Indeed, they go as far as to suggest this aspect of political liberalism implies the whole project will collapse into a species of comprehensive liberalism. I reject this claim, and argue that by carefully considering the aims of political liberalism the project will in fact promote autonomy far less than these theorists believe. The implications of the ongoing argument developed in chapters four and five is thus that parents have significant

² I use the term parents throughout the thesis to mean the adults entrusted with their care. For various practical and philosophical reasons, discussed in chapter four, I believe this will usually be children's biological progenitors. However, I do not assert that this is necessarily the case, or that biological parents have a deep moral right to raise their children.

authority in shaping their children's non-political values, since the requirement of raising reasonable citizens is a relatively weak one.

The third section of the thesis is entitled 'Justice to Children', and explores the ways in which children fit into liberal theories of justice. Chapter six explores the membership requirements of political liberalism. I argue that we cannot plausibly exclude children from the category of citizens without undermining political liberalism's commitment to the equal respect owed to all adult citizens. There are no plausible grounds rooted in human development that would allow us to divide children from adults in the way required. This implies that just as the principle of legitimacy demands that the liberal state be able to justify its actions in reasonable terms to all adult citizens, it must be able to offer reasonable reasons defending its conduct towards child citizens as well.

In chapter seven I explore the implications of the claim that children must be counted as full citizens by developing an account of the reasons we owe to children, and how they differ from those we owe to adults. I begin by considering Matthew Clayton's argument that owing children justification implies that we cannot teach them any non-political values. I attempt to show that this position is untenable, since children will acquire a comprehensive view anyway. What matters is the content of this view, not only the intentions of parents or other adults. On my account the principle of legitimacy allows parents to teach children in the way they desire, with the proviso that these beliefs are both plausible and conducive to certain aspects of the child's development. Even on this weaker interpretation, the political liberal model of education, as elucidated in section two, is shown to be illegitimate.

The final section of the thesis is entitled 'A Neutral Defence of a Liberal Education'. Here I aim to show that the most attractive elements of political liberalism, as laid out in the first section, can be made compatible with a scheme of education that is justifiable to those children on whom it will be coercively enforced. The twin goals of education on my model are to ensure that children hold a plausible, coherent and comprehensive view of the world and human flourishing, and that they

possess a range of skills to pursue the requirements of this view in a successful way. The argument of this section has two parts.

In chapter eight I show how liberal education can be legitimately designed to aid children in coming to hold a plausible and coherent comprehensive view. The best means of attaining this is by encouraging children to learn about a variety of different doctrines. While, in practice, this is a similar policy to those advanced by theorists such as Callan and Brighouse it is justified in a very different way, and, as such, can avoid the objections which I have levelled at these views.

In chapter nine, I show how education can prepare children to flourish given the comprehensive view that eventually informs their lives. I aim to map out a series of general skills, which I argue will be useful to children regardless of their comprehensive views. These skills are justified because they enable individuals to prosper in societies such as ours.

In the concluding chapter, I review the account which results from the combination of the previous chapters. I show that this account, despite its practical similarities to 'education for autonomy', is still faithful to the most attractive features of political liberalism. I also reflect on the lessons for political liberalism that can be drawn from the case study of education.

Section 1

Liberalism and Pluralism

Chapter 1- The purposes of education

Before developing my own account, it is useful to survey existing attempts to grapple with the problems of education in the circumstances of pluralism. The purpose of the review is to introduce some influential arguments against which I will situate my own theory. As well as outlining these existing arguments, the review divides accounts of education into two broad groups, 'education for citizenship' and 'education for autonomy'. Analysing the distinctions between these groups is the subject of the first substantive section of this thesis.

Theorists who defend the strategy of 'education for autonomy' argue that the purpose of education ought to be to promote the ability of children to live autonomous and independent lives. By contrast, those theorists who defend 'education for citizenship' focus on the civic goals of education. Chiefly, this is to maintain a just and stable liberal order. On this account, education's most important role is in ensuring everyone plays by the rules rather than fostering any one vision of how it is best for one to live.

This divergence within the debate over education is linked to one of the most significant theoretical divides in contemporary liberal theory. This is the distinction, made by John Rawls, between political and comprehensive varieties of liberalism. *Political Liberalism* is defined by the thesis that the justification of liberal institutions, and perhaps of all policies of the liberal state,³ cannot rest upon the truth or falsity of any one contested doctrine. Instead, the justification for liberalism must be independent of such matters. Ronald Dworkin terms this the 'discontinuous' strategy for justifying liberalism, which reflects the fact that the justification of liberal institutions is logically discrete from any substantive theory of ethics or morality (Dworkin, 1990: 16-22).

As conceived by Rawls, the framework of political liberalism rules as illegitimate claims that the state should use civic education to further one, distinctly liberal, conception of the good life (Rawls, 1993: 199). Since the state cannot legitimately promote any one comprehensive view, it cannot attempt to shape children's non-

³ See Quong (2004) on the limits of public reason.

political values. Instead, the focus of education is upon achieving a shared set of civic aims, and as such, the aim is to imbue a purely political set of values such as a commitment to toleration and diversity. This more limited aim is regarded as a permissible goal for public policy.

Political liberals are contrasted with comprehensive liberals, for whom the justification for political institutions is interwoven with an account of interpersonal morality and a notion of the good life. This label captures a set of theories that is far broader than that demarcated by 'political liberalism'. The category of 'comprehensive liberals' includes theorists such as Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill as well as a wide range of contemporary theorists. In this thesis, the chief example of comprehensive liberalism is liberal perfectionism. This theory which conceives of the good life in terms of the value of autonomy and believes the role of the state should be to promote this value. In the case of education, this position is thus encapsulated by two core claims. Firstly that promoting autonomy is directly beneficial to the children concerned, and secondly that this value is sufficient to justify a preferred curriculum and set of supporting institutions.

Education for citizenship.

Rawls-Political Liberalism

Despite not being a work primarily concerned with education, the natural starting point for this review of the literature is Rawls' *Political Liberalism*. This text provides the underpinning of most contemporary accounts of 'education for citizenship', and the work outlines core arguments for refraining from inculcating non-political values. For this thesis, the most significant such non-political value will be a robust notion of autonomy, Rawls argues that using education to advance a conception of autonomy or individuality goes beyond the legitimate use of state power (Rawls, 1993: 199).

The impetus for *Political Liberalism* is a problem Rawls perceived with his earlier account of stability laid out in *A Theory of Justice*. Precisely what this problem was is a live issue amongst Rawls' interpreters, and will be dealt with in more detail in

chapter three. What is relevant here is that Rawls believed that there was a deep incompatibility between his earlier account of stability and the emergence of pluralistic society. Since such pluralism is the natural result of free institutions, which are integral to his account of a just society, he thought this represented a serious tension between two central aspects of his theory.

Political liberalism alters Rawls' theory, known as 'justice as fairness', to take account of the fact of reasonable pluralism. Reasonable pluralism is differentiated from simple pluralism by virtue of the fact that many of the various comprehensive conceptions found in society are held reasonably. Our societies are therefore characterised by a plurality of co-existing reasonable views, although of course all societies will include some citizens whose views are unreasonable. For Rawls, reasonable pluralism results from a collection of factors known as the 'burdens of judgment'. The burdens include the fact that there will likely be differences in citizen's perspectives, as well as problems in weighing evidence, as well as the existence of hard cases. Taken together, these factors explain why reasonable citizens do not necessarily reach consensus on matters of ethics or politics (Rawls, 1993: 54-58).

This presents a problem in so far as it calls into question the legitimacy of liberal institutions. According to Rawls, the liberal idea of legitimacy demands that the use of coercive force is, in principle, acceptable to all reasonable persons (Rawls, 1993: 136). Given the fact of reasonable pluralism, this principle of legitimacy implies that the justification of liberalism cannot depend upon the truth or falsity of any one (or set of) reasonable comprehensive doctrines. Instead, Rawls argued that liberal principles must be defended as purely political; that is, freestanding from the deep disagreements which threaten to divide pluralistic societies. In this way, the deepest questions of morality and philosophy are put aside from the political realm and citizens can each understand the reasons given for the use of public power, though of course questions of ethics and theology will continue to be hotly debated by individuals in their capacity as private citizens.

Instead of appeals to comprehensive ideals to justify liberalism, Rawls instead relies on what he calls the 'ideals implicit in a democratic culture'(Rawls, 1993: 100). These shared ideals are comprised of the central ideas motivating democratic societies. They include, most importantly, the notion that all citizens are to be regarded as politically free and equal and that there is virtue in sustaining a regime that respects them as such. These ideals are, Rawls believes, widely held across many reasonable doctrines found in a democratic society. The fact that many different doctrines are able to accept these fundamental ideas creates what Rawls refers to as an overlapping consensus of shared norms (Rawls, 1993: 144-145) He believes this overlapping consensus is sufficiently powerful to maintain social unity despite the presence of reasonable pluralism.

This core idea of ensuring that the justification of liberalism can be made explicable to all reasonable citizens gives rise to the notion of public reason. Rawls presents this idea as public in three senses. First, it is reasoning carried out by the public in a democratic fashion. Second, the ends of debate are public in that they are for the common, not sectarian, good. Third, the reasons given must be public, meaning that they are acceptable to all reasonable persons. This idea of public reason guides the notion of legitimacy underlying political liberalism; only institutions and policies the justification of which can be framed in terms of public reason can justly provide the basis for the use of coercive power (Rawls, 1993: 162).

Taken together, these ideas make up the core framework of political liberalism. In a brief discussion of their implications for education, Rawls argues that they imply a very different set of policies to that implied by comprehensive liberalism. His political version of liberalism requires that children be taught a curriculum sufficient for them to become participants in a liberal society. This implies that they have knowledge of their civil rights and of the constitutional arrangements of the regime in which they live. Further, he argues that an education should encourage the political virtues, meaning that the individual will wish to honour the terms of fair social co-operation. In Rawlsian terms, this means teaching children

in such a way as to enable the devolvement of a sense of justice and a settled desire to act in accordance with the principles of justice.

However, it is impermissible, on Rawls' account, to use education to promote distinctively liberal values as a model for a worthwhile life (Rawls, 1993: 199). The examples he gives of such values are Millian individuality or Kantian autonomy. These doctrines represent only one of the many possible reasonable conceptions of what constitutes a good life. This formula of teaching liberal political virtues, while abstaining from teaching liberalism as an answer to wider questions, provides the basic structure for the other political liberals covered in this review.

Macedo-Diversity and Distrust

Two of the most prominent thinkers to apply the ideas of *Political Liberalism* more fully to the specific problems raised by education are Stephen Macedo and Eamonn Callan (the former of whom is the most closely Rawlsian). Macedo shares the core tenets of the political liberal project, and as such argues that state policy cannot be based upon claims to the whole truth about metaphysics or ethics, and instead must embody a set of shared civic aims. The purpose of *Diversity and Distrust* is to show how these core principles can be used to justify a common education system with a nationally set curriculum. Macedo's defence of liberal institutions, and common schools in particular, is premised on the notion that a shared set of liberal institutions are of great worth across society, but particularly to minority religious communities or creeds. He then argues that a public school system, with a common curriculum, is of fundamental importance in preserving these institutions. The book thus explores the core political liberal aim of securing stability for the right reasons.

Macedo is able to draw upon two sources to justify a common education. Firstly, as a political liberal, he draws upon the value of the shared political commitments latent in the political culture. Secondly, he believes that liberal regimes have proven the most effective at safeguarding such civil rights as freedom of association and worship. These are freedoms that are important to precisely those individuals who most often question the legitimacy of a common education in a

liberal state. For instance, small religious communities have much to gain from a culture which values freedom of worship. As such, an argument in favour of the value of liberal institutions can be made even to those who are sceptical about some of the specific elements of the school curriculum.

However, despite these broad similarities there are important distinctions between the approaches of Macedo and Rawls. Macedo terms his own approach 'civic liberalism', to distinguish it from purely political liberalism. This reflects his insistence that the purview of liberal principles goes beyond the basic structure of society. Instead, he believes, adequately attaining our shared aims requires a vibrant civic culture. Much of Macedo's argument is premised on a belief that without such a culture, liberal institutions are in jeopardy, or, at least, require constant and active support from the citizens of the state.

Given this, liberal institutions, in particular educational ones, are judged by the extent to which they encourage this civic-minded participation. This role gives licence to a curriculum that is more interventionist than the one envisioned by Rawls. Macedo advocates schools becoming small communities in themselves, in which racial integration and mixing of people from different socio-economic backgrounds are actively encouraged by school policy. He locates such policies within what he calls the 'transformative' project of liberalism. To this end, he claims that the 'aim of liberal civic order should be to promote patterns of belief and action that are supportive of liberalism, to transform people's deepest commitments in ways that are supportive of liberal politics' (Macedo, 2000: 205).

As this quote shows, this project requires that some individuals who hold comprehensive views must alter their views towards attitudes and opinions which are compatible with liberalism. Macedo thus envisions that the long term effect of liberal institutions, and in particular a common liberal education system, will be to shift the tenets of comprehensive doctrines towards arrangements which are hospitable to core liberal principles. This is a common feature in both Rawls' and Macedo's theories and given plausible empirical assumptions seems a necessary requirement of a successful political liberal strategy. There are, after all, many

citizens living in currently existing liberal societies whose beliefs are far from being compatible with political liberal principles. However, there is an important difference in attitude between the two theorists when faced with the need for such changes.

Rawls agrees with Macedo that there are legitimate grounds for seeking to educate children in a sense of justice even if it would alter their comprehensive views. However, faced with such cases he states that 'The unavoidable consequences of reasonable requirements for children's education may have to be accepted, often with regret' (Rawls, 1993: 200). By contrast, Macedo, when considering the transformative power of liberalism on the Catholic Church in America, comments that 'this story represents a dramatic triumph of the transformative potential of civic liberalism' (Macedo, 2000: 134). This difference in reaction is suggestive of a significant divergence between the theorists. We might expect Rawls to want to minimise the changes that occur to comprehensive doctrines through their contact with liberal society, whereas Macedo is likely to promote such changes when they accord with his understanding of liberal purposes.

Eamonn Callan-Creating Citizens

In *Creating Citizens*, Eamonn Callan argues that a liberal system of education ought to promote the capacities and drive necessary to live an autonomous life. Indeed, he devotes a significant part of his work to showing how being autonomous contributes to living a flourishing life. (Callan, 1997: 43-67) Since, for political liberals, a belief in autonomy's value is only one of many possible reasonable views, promoting this value seems a clear violation of the principle of legitimacy. There is then a major disagreement between the two theorists on the proper scope of liberal education system. However, while the goal of promoting autonomy is one which Rawls would not share, Callan reaches this conclusion from premises drawn from Rawls' own work. Thus, rather than dismissing Rawls' fundamental principles, Callan's argument is that their full implications, when

applied to education, are such as to require institutions which will promote autonomy.

The heart of Callan's case is premised on the Rawlsian notion that all children must come to accept the burdens of judgement (Callan, 1997: 30). This is a requirement of becoming a reasonable citizen in the Rawlsian model. Appreciating the existence of the burdens of judgement implies accepting that different citizens who hold beliefs entirely different from one's own might still be reasonable. Given the nature of a pluralistic society, it is critical for liberal citizens to be able to respond in this way to adherents of other faiths or creeds. If they cannot then the political liberal project of putting aside such differences, in the pursuit of a fair scheme of social co-operation, is seriously at risk of being imperilled. For Callan, understanding the burdens of judgement requires taking a deeply reflective view of one's own beliefs as well as of the relation of one's beliefs to those of others. This, in turn, will require a curriculum similar to those proposed by theorists such as Brighouse who advocate the direct promotion of autonomy. Thus for Callan the requirements of a just liberal state go beyond the civic mission Macedo defends, and in fact collapse political liberalism into a species of comprehensive liberalism.

Whether Callan's arguments are convincing is a key question that must be examined when determining the educational implications of political liberalism. This will be addressed at length later in this thesis. What is significant here is that despite advocating institutions that are very similar to those theorists who wish to promote autonomy, Callan's arguments are, at their core, concerned with the civic aims of education. Citizens must accept the burdens of judgement for a political liberal society to function properly and, as such, education has a profoundly important role in preparing future citizens to accept these constraints. This differs significantly from both an argument that simply suggests that being autonomous is the best way for humans to live, and from one that suggests that understanding and accepting the burdens of judgement is intrinsically valuable.

Conclusions on 'Education for Citizenship'

The brief review of Rawls, Macedo and Callan highlights several important considerations about 'education for citizenship'. Most importantly, we see how the political liberal principle of legitimacy leads to a policy of neutrality between competing comprehensive doctrines. This principle implied that the state cannot take a side in the contentious debates which divide society but must instead offer justifications which are, at least in principle, acceptable to all reasonable citizens. For this framework, the existence of pluralistic society represents a barrier to state actions and a test for justification.

It is this eschewal of divisive ethical and metaphysical questions, and hence the commitment to neutrality, which entails an education system focussed on civic matters. Were the state to promote any conception of children's best interests, it would seem committed to picking sides in divisive questions of the good. The account pursued by Rawls and other political liberals is intended to avoid these contentious issues. Thus the focus on liberal stability is, for Rawls, a goal that can be shared by all members of the overlapping consensus, an agreement about the value of liberal institutions which is held across the many different reasonable views held in society. Likewise, Macedo points to the great value of liberal institutions across many different sections of society.

Despite these similarities, the second point to note is that the theoretical decision to eschew reliance on any comprehensive doctrine does not - or, at least not obviously - determine the content of any educational account. Thus while Rawls and Macedo both endorse a similar conception of liberal legitimacy, their accounts differ in important respects. I noted that the two theorists take very different positions on the alteration of doctrines via a liberal education; Macedo celebrates such changes, while Rawls views them with regret. Eamonn Callan diverges even more sharply from Rawls' position, to the point of arguing that the correct interpretation of political liberalism requires rejecting many of the features Rawls believes are part of this model. Thus even accepting important features of *Political Liberalism* leaves several significant questions unanswered.

Education for Autonomy

Feinberg-The Child's right to an open future.

Despite being a text primarily concerned with whether children ought to have legal rights, Joel Feinberg's important piece is one of the most influential arguments in favour of using education to promote autonomy. Feinberg begins with an analysis of familiar liberal rights such as freedom of speech and protection against physical harm. His purpose is to assess which rights are appropriate for all individuals, and which should only be held by adults. To do this, he divides rights into two broad categories; those protecting welfare and those defending autonomous choices. For rights safeguarding welfare, protection from physical harm, etc., he finds no grounds to differentiate the claims of children and adults. These are termed A-C rights, indicating that they are shared by both adults and children (Feinberg, 2007: 121).

Since children cannot be taken to be autonomous agents in the same way as adults, they cannot hold rights designed to protect certain kinds of autonomous choices. He terms these A rights, indicating that they are restricted only to adults. However, while children are not yet able to hold these rights, Feinberg argues that we must offer children rights to protect their ability to become the kind of individuals who will be able to act autonomously in the future when they have matured sufficiently. On his model, children thus hold 'anticipatory rights' which derive their importance from the adult the child will become.

Since the purpose of these rights is to protect the development of autonomy, Feinberg gives them the collective name of 'the right to an open future' (Feinberg, 2007: 120-122). In spelling out the implications of this right, he argues that there are two classes of things that could prevent one from making autonomous choices about life plans. These are the internal and external conditions of choice. Examples, of external effects that would limit our ability to choose are such things as coercion or fraud. The internal requirements of making our own choices include the cognitive capabilities required to make rational decisions and an exposure over our lives to a variety of differing options such that we can compare

and contrast the advantages of each. Feinberg also considers that failing to develop abilities or talents may be a barrier to the choices protected by A-rights, if the adult would otherwise wish to pursue them later in life. Feinberg's approach, then, is to draw upon the similarity between external barriers to autonomous choice, on which there is broad liberal agreement on the need for rights, and internal ones, arguing that these too deserve a similar degree of protection. From the necessity to protect future adults from internal barriers to their ability to make autonomous choices, he derives the child's right to an open future.

Arneson and Shapiro-Democratic Authority

While Feinberg's account is central to the development of theories which posit 'a right to an open future', several other articles accept the importance of furthering children's abilities to choose between competing ways of life. One of the most significant is Arneson and Shapiro's article, 'Democratic authority and religious freedom'. This paper deals with the issues raised by the United States Supreme Court case of *Wisconsin v Yoder*. The 1972 trial of Yoder concerns the claims of an Amish parent, Jonas Yoder, who claimed that his children should be allowed to leave school at the age of 14. This claim was made on the basis that Jonas felt this limited education was sufficient to furnish his children for the life envisioned by the Amish community. Any further education beyond this age would risk undermining his children's commitment to Amish principles. The court eventually found in favour of these claims, and allowed Mr. Yoder to remove his children from education once they had completed the eighth grade.⁴ This case set a precedent that applied to all Amish children, and therefore became a central piece of law regarding the relationship between the Amish community and wider society.

Arneson and Shapiro present a series of arguments opposing the court's decision to make the case that the court should have forced the Amish children to stay in public education. The arguments they present are premised on both the democratic interest in having children prepared for participatory citizenship, and

⁴See court records, *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972,406 U.S. 205, at 245-46).

on the interests of children themselves in receiving an education to further autonomy. This is instructive, since it reminds us that while political liberals may for principled reasons avoid claims about autonomy's place in the good life, and hence rely only on civic interests, other commentators can coherently employ arguments drawing from both the interests of the child and those of society.

However, while these civic arguments are important they could also be adopted by political liberals and, as such, they need not concern us here. The most important argument the authors present is what they term the 'instrumental argument for autonomy'. I focus on this because it is explicitly grounded on the child's interests, and because this account is an extremely influential one in educational debates. It purports to show why autonomy is in the best interests of children without assuming that autonomy is a constitutive element of the good life. Indeed, Arneson and Shapiro claim to make 'no controversial assumptions about the good life or about the role of autonomy within a vision of the good life that are biased against religious traditions' (Arneson and Shapiro, 1996: 401).

In brief, the argument begins, first, from the premise that there are a great many ways of life open to any child. Second, it claims that some of these ways of life are more suited, because of talent and inclination, to some people rather than others. Children are lucky if their parents, schooling or other early experiences push them towards a way of life to which they are well suited, but there is an obvious danger that children will be pushed into choices that will cause them to struggle. The third premise is that with careful study of various ways of life, children are able to make choices that are generally suited to their natures. Of course, many people may make mistakes, or their character may change over time, but this consideration need not undermine the instrumental argument. The argument put forward by Arneson and Shapiro merely relies on it being generally true that, on balance, children are capable of making wise choices when well informed about the opportunities open to them. Offering children a variety of different opportunities is thus consonant with furthering their welfare because they are likely to choose options to which they are suited. From these it follows that fewer people will follow ways of life which are detrimental to them. Autonomy is thus

seen as instrumentally valuable because it allows individuals to review and revise beliefs, and thus come to beliefs 'that could withstand critical reflection and that would be a reliable guide to a valuable and worthy life' (Arneson and Shapiro, 1996: 399).

To illustrate how these instrumental benefits of autonomy are sufficient to entail that a liberal education would be in the best of interests of the Amish children, the authors offer a simplified model of the issues involved in the case. In this model, 'the assumptions presented are more favourable to the Amish cause than any alternative set that could be adopted without violating the establishment clause of the first amendment' (Arneson and Shapiro, 1996: 402). While the first amendment is obviously specific to the American case, the establishment clause – which holds that congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion - is representative of the core liberal belief that the state should not embody one religious faith to the detriment of others.

The model assumes each Amish child is faced with only two possible life choices, 'the secular worldly life', and the 'religious traditionalist'. No assumption is made as to the relative worth of each life. However, it is assumed that persons differ in their traits so that for some the traditional life is better, while for others the secular life is more fitting. Autonomy's only value is in increasing the chance that a person will make the correct choice of life for his or her own abilities. Without assuming, as some liberals would, that a choice made autonomously is inherently better than a non-autonomous one, it nevertheless follows that for instrumental reasons persons are better off receiving an education that promotes their autonomy. The authors argue that this conclusion entails that the court ought to have rejected the Amish case, and more generally that the purpose of education in liberal societies ought to be the promotion of autonomy.

Brighouse- School Choice and Social Justice

The arguments presented by Harry Brighouse share a number of features with the instrumental argument outlined above. This instrumental argument will be the main example of education for autonomy considered in the thesis. A number of

arguments deployed by Brighouse refine this argument and show more clearly its political implications. Outlining his position, Brighouse explicitly differentiates his account from purely civic theories. He writes,

‘Civic education aims to teach children the beliefs and habits which will help to stabilize the, presumably just, state. Those arguments often start with the need to maintain the state in some prescribed form, and then prescribe education of a certain kind to cultivate in children the characters likely to maintain stability within the state. The instrumentalist argument for teaching autonomy, by contrast, starts with the obligation which adults have towards prospective adults, to provide them with certain kinds of opportunity to live well. The state is charged neither with maintaining its own stability, nor with promoting the attitudes and abilities which will make the institutions of the state healthy and just, but with providing prospective citizens with the substantive means to select pursuit of a better, rather than worse, conception of the good. The fundamental interest each person has in living well yields an obligation on all to provide prospective adults with an instrument for selecting well among possible ways of life. Confidence that others have a real opportunity to live lives that are good for them is only possible if we provide the means to select one’ (Brighouse, 2003: 70).

For Brighouse, the notion of autonomy most pertinent to educational policy is a less theoretically loaded one than is propounded by other theorists. He distinguishes his account both from the Kantian understanding that to be autonomous is to act in accordance with the categorical imperative and from views which hold that to be autonomous is to act in accordance with one’s own values. Instead, Brighouse defines autonomous preferences as those that are endorsed consciously by the agent. This contrasts with beliefs and attitudes that are held in the absence of reflection and introspection. Autonomous actions are those that follow these preferences in the absence of coercion or manipulation.

The educational agenda that flows from this understanding of autonomy focuses on developing children’s critical faculties, and on exposing children to a range of differing views. Thus, the requirements of liberal education are that children come

to know 'How to identify various sorts of fallacious arguments, and how to distinguish among them, as well as between them and non-fallacious arguments. The autonomous person needs to be able to distinguish between appeals to authority and appeals to evidence, between inductive and deductive arguments, as well as to identify *ad hominem* arguments and other misleading rhetorical devices'. Moreover, the autonomous child must be exposed to 'a range of religious, non-religious, and anti-religious ethical views in some detail; about the kinds of reasoning deployed within those views; and the attitudes of proponents toward non-believers, heretics, and the secular world'(Brighouse, 2006: 24).

Brighouse does not claim that acting autonomously is what creates the value of any way of life. Indeed, he freely admits the possibility that non-autonomous lives might well instantiate other values to an extent that autonomous lives cannot, and that they can therefore be valuable ways of life. The value of different ways of life is thus derived from aspects of the way of life itself, rather than the reasons for, or way in, which it is adopted. On such a model, having the capacities necessary to be autonomous will not directly imply that one is leading a flourishing life. Instead, just as with Arneson and Shapiro, the claim is that becoming an autonomous individual will greatly increase one's chances of flourishing in life.

To support this connection between autonomy and flourishing, Brighouse points to two specific aspects of living well. The first is that while there are many different ways of living well, some of which may indeed be non-autonomous, there are some ways of life that are not valuable. Being able to evaluate the different options one possesses is thus valuable in so far as it enables one to select a way of life which is in fact valuable. Brighouse fully admits that rational reflection is not an infallible tool in assessing the merits of different ways of life. However, his argument does not require this strong claim, only the claim that possessing the skills of rational reflection and critique makes children more likely to end up living valuable ways of life than they would be without them.

The second connection between living well and autonomy is the need to live one's life well 'from the inside'. This implies that to live well one must be able to

endorse the way of life as valuable for oneself, and accept that its tenets are both valuable and right for you. If one cannot live one's life well from the inside, then even if one's way of life is valuable one cannot flourish within it. Brighthouse gives the example of a way of life in which only heterosexual marriage is permissible. Such a way of life cannot be lived successfully by a homosexual. 'Trapped in such a way of life, he will be alienated from it. It may be a good way of life, but not one that *he* can endorse from the inside and therefore not one *he* can live well' (Brighthouse, 2006: 17).

The importance of being able to endorse one's way of life properly from the inside has links to autonomy in two ways. First, it reinforces the value of children being able to select their way of life from a number of different options. This is because some individuals will be simply incapable of living well within certain ways of life. As Brighthouse makes clear, the conservative heterosexual way of life may well be a valuable one, but it is not one that can be authentically pursued by a homosexual. Assuming, plausibly, that one's sexuality is not something one can choose to alter, it follows that homosexual children must be given the opportunity to select a different way of life if they are to have any chance of flourishing at all. Second, children need to be able to evaluate the tenets of a view if they are to be able to assess, early, whether it is a way of life which they are likely to be able and willing to endorse for themselves.

Conclusions on education for autonomy.

The three arguments surveyed are more diverse in character than the arguments surveyed in the section on 'education for citizenship'. There are though important features in common to all these accounts, an analysis of which will form the basis of the next chapter. Significantly, each of the arguments surveyed in 'education for autonomy' shares the initial assumption that the best education system is the one that promotes the flourishing of the children who are subject to it. Since each of the three theorists surveyed also believes that education ought to promote autonomy, this entails a view of children's interests in which rational deliberation and reflection are held to lead to a more flourishing life.

This view underpins Feinberg's defence of children's right to an open future. For him liberal rights are premised on the view that they protect individuals' important interests in being able to make up their own minds about important choices facing them in their lives. Being an autonomous agent is thus a vital element in living well. From this, he argues that children must be able to make up their own minds about those same fundamental questions of ethics and theology which underpin the anticipatory right to an open future.

The second important conclusion of these arguments is to show that while theorists who favour education for autonomy must be committed to the thought that autonomy is in the best interests of children, they need not be committed to a thick Kantian conception of the person. The instrumental argument developed by both Arneson and Shapiro and by Brighouse is instructive here, since this argument explicitly avoids the state taking such a controversial metaphysical view. Instead, autonomy is justified because it has instrumental benefits; being autonomous means a child is more likely to select a way of life that will enable them to flourish.

Surveying the instrumental argument is thus a useful step, since it shows that advocates of 'education for autonomy' may not be as sectarian as political liberals sometimes assert. Given the appeal of the instrumental argument, we cannot simply respond that Kantian or Millian notions of flourishing are illegitimate guides to public policy, since even if this is true there may still be good reasons to promote autonomy through education. Instead, we must look at the fundamental differences between those theories which aim to promote autonomy directly and those which see a civic role for education. Chief amongst these differences is that while 'education for citizenship' responded to pluralism by creating an education system which could be justified to citizens across the divides in society, 'education for autonomy' responds to pluralism by enabling children to be able to choose for themselves amongst the many different options which exist within pluralistic societies.

These differing responses suggest that the two strategies are premised on a very different view of the nature and importance of pluralism. Political liberals view the differing opinions held in pluralistic society as boundaries to political theorising. A state which explicitly endorsed any single conception of the good would be unjustifiable to all those citizens who held a different view. By contrast, liberals who aim to use education to promote autonomy see pluralism as presenting a range of options which are open to citizens. The task is then to determine how to make children best prepared to face this plurality, which explains the reliance on personal autonomy. Exploring these differing perspectives on pluralism will form the basis for my own comparison of the two approaches over the next two chapters.

Chapter 2-Liberal Perfectionism and Value Pluralism

From the analysis of the existing literature, we thus see two very different strategies employed to meet the challenges faced by education systems in pluralistic societies. This chapter will analyse the first of these: 'education for autonomy'. As noted above, this view is distinguished by being child-centric; it aims to use education to further the welfare of children. On the face of it, this strategy is perhaps the more intuitively appealing of the two routes I have surveyed. It seems natural to believe that the core aim of any scheme of education ought to be promoting the interests of the children who receive it. This intuition is a powerful and attractive one, and is something which I will attempt to keep hold of when developing my own account. However, this chapter will argue that those liberal theorists who currently employ this strategy commit a set of inter-related errors that are the product of the framework within which their accounts are developed.

Within contemporary political philosophy, the view that the state ought to arrange institutions to aid its citizens in living flourishing lives is termed 'perfectionism'. For liberal perfectionists, as for those theorists I covered who apply this view to education, promoting the welfare of citizens usually implies promoting a notion of autonomy or individuality. Liberal perfectionism of this kind provides the most significant alternative to political liberalism, which we saw was the theoretical underpinning of 'education for citizenship'.

Joseph Chan defines perfectionism as 'the view that the state ought to promote valuable conceptions of the good life' (Chan, 2000: 5). As he makes clear, taken in this broad sense the label perfectionism covers a wide array of theorists. Indeed, he argues that 'If one takes the long view of the development of western political thought, perfectionism seems to be the standard view of the role of the state' (Chan, 2000 :5). In light of the wide variety of thinkers this label can be applied to, we should not expect all 'perfectionist' philosophers to have similar theories.

Instead, Chan makes it clear that, at heart, perfectionism is a view about the legitimate role of the state and about the proper use of coercive force. Thus, being a perfectionist does not by itself commit one to any view about what human flourishing consists of, but only to the idea that we can come to knowledge about human flourishing and that the state ought to promote it.

Theorists have often compared political liberalism to perfectionism purely based on their normative content, and thus assessed the plausibility and attractiveness of the liberal theory of legitimacy or the perfectionist aim of promoting worthwhile lives (for instance, see Lecce, 2008: 97-134). What is less often appreciated is that political liberalism and liberal perfectionism rest on very different understandings of pluralism. Even amongst those theorists who have tackled these questions, the focus has tended to be on the character or implications of pluralism, rather than on the more fundamental question of what pluralism consists in (McKinnon, 2003).

In this chapter I aim to show how intimately liberal perfectionism is bound up with the theory of value pluralism, which understands pluralistic society as consisting of a multitude of independently, and incomparably, valuable ways of life. This is a fundamentally different understanding from the Rawlsian notion of 'reasonable pluralism', which focuses on disagreements between philosophical and theological doctrines. Following this classification, I argue that this reliance on the theory of value pluralism represents a serious weakness for liberal perfectionism. My arguments against the theory of value pluralism have direct implications for the educational debate. This is because value pluralism forms the foundations for leading accounts of 'education for autonomy', most obviously the instrumental argument reviewed above. I will show that value pluralism fails to adequately describe the circumstances of pluralism liberal democratic societies. In light of the failure of value pluralism to describe pluralistic society appropriately, we are pushed towards understanding pluralistic society in terms of the notion of reasonable pluralism. This in turn provides a strong reason to adopt the political liberal framework as elucidated by Rawls and Macedo.

I show why value pluralism is unable to properly deal with the diversity present in modern society through a survey of the writings of the most influential liberal perfectionist, Joseph Raz. While Raz himself is not explicitly concerned with education, his work provides the most detailed and nuanced account of the relationship between the perfectionist understanding of the role of political power and the theory of value pluralism. An analysis of Raz's work thus provides a natural starting point for this discussion. Moreover, while Raz himself does not often deal with questions of education, each of these two aspects of Raz's account, value pluralism and perfectionism, are central to the 'instrumental argument' for the promotion of autonomy through education. As mentioned above, this argument is developed by Brighouse, Arneson and Shapiro and is one of the most influential child centred accounts of the role of education. The problems that are revealed through a discussion of Raz are also present within this educational argument. This is then demonstrated through a consideration of the case of *Wisconsin v Yoder*.

Raz: Perfectionism and value pluralism.

Raz gives a slightly different account from Chan of the perfectionist thesis concerning the role of the state. According to Raz, 'It is the goal of all political action to enable individuals to pursue valid conceptions of the good and to discourage evil or empty ones' (Raz, 1986: 133). Considered alone, this perfectionist view does not seem to have a close connection to liberalism; indeed, it might seem to be illiberal. Liberal freedoms seem reliant on the assumption that individuals ought to be left to make up their own minds about how to lead their lives, rather than being guided in this by the state. Likewise, a belief in the importance of toleration implies that the state ought to permit some activities even if they are regarded as in some sense evil or empty. For Raz, the connection between perfectionism and liberalism comes via the concept of autonomy. Crucially, this concept of autonomy is itself dependent upon the theory of value pluralism.

For Raz, the existence of pluralism implies that there are many different valuable ways of life pursued within society. The notion 'way of life' is defined very broadly as "Views and opinions, activities, emotions expressed or portrayed (in forms of public expression) are an aspect of a wider net of opinions, habits of action or of dressing, attitudes etc, which taken together, form a distinctive style or form of life' (Raz, 1994: 60). The continued existence of pluralism is explained by Raz as a consequence of the impossibility of combining all the various goods open to people together into one life. This is the thesis of practical incompatibility. Valuable pursuits are 'incompatible in that no person can combine all of them in a single life, as they call on different qualities and relative neglect or even suppression of other qualities which are good in themselves' (Raz, 1986: 395). The practice of any way of life thus entails the attainment of certain virtues, and many of these virtues are incompatible within any one human life. Thus, it is an integral feature of the human condition that our choices will necessarily preclude valuable alternatives.

This observation is combined with Raz's belief in the incommensurability of these fundamental values. Incommensurability implies that it makes no sense to attempt to compare the worth of the various choices open to individuals against some universally valid scale of measurement, since no such scale exists. The test of incommensurability is the failure of transitivity. Thus, the condition of incommensurability holds between two options when '(1) Neither is better than the other, and (2) there is (or could be) an option that is better than one but not the other' (Raz, 1986: 325). So, for instance, consider a situation in which an individual is faced by a choice between pursuing a life of soldiering or that of an academic at their local university. It may be that neither choice is intrinsically more valuable than the other, meaning that their life could go just as well with either choice. It might also be that the option of becoming an academic at Harvard is more valuable than at their local institution. Even though Harvard is preferable to a job at one's local university, it might not be immediately superior to a life in the army. This would thus show incommensurability between the life of an academic and that of a soldier.

When we are faced with a dilemma between incommensurable options, it represents the point at which reason cannot guide our choices between one and the other. Given incommensurability, neither of the options is rationally compelling, and thus choosing either does not leave one open to rational criticism. In this way, choices between incommensurable options differ significantly from choices in which one option is in fact more valuable than the other, but this value is hidden or misread. This would be true if we were faced with a career choice in which one option did not in fact represent a valuable way of life.

The practical incompatibility of valuable ways of life, combined with the thesis of incommensurability, explains both the emergence and permanence of pluralism in society. Given incompatibility, it is an inevitable part of life that we are faced with choices between pursuing different, albeit genuinely valuable, goods. Given incommensurability, there is no way of ranking these various choices into a coherent and rationally compelling order. Our expectation then is that even rational agents, fully aware of the value of the choices that they are presented with, will pursue different ways of life.

While this provides an explanation for the continuing presence of diversity in society, these considerations alone tell us nothing about the normative significance of pluralism. Indeed, the analysis, as it stands, might seem to speak in favour of intervention designed to limit diversity, perhaps by attempting to engender a preference for one valuable way of life over others. This would be attractive if this would achieve valuable social goals, such as stability or unity. The normative importance of diversity (which is regarded as an additional element over and above the separate value of each way of life) within Raz's conception of pluralism is provided by the special value of autonomy.

Given his framework of value pluralism placing special importance on a life being autonomous may seem a difficult move for Raz. Raz cannot assert that autonomous lives are always superior to non-autonomous ones, or posit that being autonomous is a necessary condition of the good life. To do this would undermine the coherence of also being a value pluralist. It would, at least,

undercut his notion of incommensurability in so far as the notion of autonomy would provide a way of evaluating the worth of different ways of life.

Despite this worry, Raz holds on to this conception of value pluralism, and explicitly denies that autonomy ought to be considered intrinsically superior to competing values, such as might be achieved by a close knit community or by living in accordance with traditional ways of life. Autonomy is only one of many valuable characteristics a life may possess, and, as Raz admits, it is incompatible with other valuable pursuits (Raz, 1986: 390). Nevertheless, he argues that the autonomous life ought to be promoted by the state, out of concern for the welfare of its citizens.⁵

Thus, Raz's claim is more complex than simply the argument that autonomy is intrinsically more valuable than alternative options. His claim is rather that, in the context of our society, individuals will be better off acting autonomously. To defend this account of autonomy's special importance, Raz relies on a claim about the pervasive impact of autonomy within our society. There is then a strong connection between flourishing within a way of life and living within a society that recognizes and respects these pursuits.

This connection between 'social forms' and human flourishing implies that the autonomous life is uniquely well suited to our environment. Raz claims that 'The mistake in this argument [that non-autonomous people can flourish in an autonomy promoting culture] is the hidden assumption that while an environment supports autonomy .., that fact does not affect the nature of the opportunities it provides. The opposite is the case. An autonomy supporting culture offers its members opportunities which cannot be had in a non-autonomous environment and lacks most of those available in the latter' (Raz 1986: 392).

To support this thesis, Raz draws attention to the change from arranged marriage to being able to choose matrimonial partners, and to the change in working

⁵ See Raz, '*The Morality of Freedom*', that autonomy is not intrinsically superior to other goods see pp 384-391. For the promotion of autonomy see pp 407-409.

practices from a society in which we are encouraged to follow our parents to one in which we have a freer choice. The point is that the change to an autonomy supporting culture does not merely offer more options, but rather changes the options such that one must be autonomous in order to succeed in them (Raz, 1986: 392-394). Thus the context of our lives, reflected in our institutions and practices, is what creates the special importance of autonomy.

Taken together with his perfectionist thesis about the role of state power, this notion of autonomy makes up the broad outline of Raz's response to pluralism. The diverse society we face is explained by the plurality of incompatible and incommensurably valuable ways of life. The value of diversity is dependent upon its contribution to autonomy. A diverse society provides a range of options around which individuals may choose how to structure their lives. The special value of autonomy is important for the state, since the state's primary responsibility is to ensure that citizens live flourishing lives. From this, it follows that the role of the state when faced by our pluralistic society is to ensure that individuals have the options and faculties which are required to live autonomous lives. Further, since individuals only flourish when they pursue valuable options, the criteria for determining whether we should offer an opportunity is whether the option is, in fact, valuable.

Raz thus provides an account of how the state might best promote human flourishing which is rooted in the notion of value pluralism. It is the existence of many, incompatible and incommensurable options which gives rise to the need for autonomous choice. Indeed, for Raz, this connection between value pluralism and autonomy is a necessary one. As he says, 'The upshot is that autonomy presupposes a variety of conflicting considerations, which require relinquishing one good for the sake of another....To put it more precisely, if autonomy is an ideal then we are committed to such a view of morality; valuing autonomy leads to the endorsement of moral pluralism' (Raz, 1986: 398).

These claims are the core of liberal perfectionism. The initial contention of perfectionists is one about the role of government, namely that the proper use of

coercive institutions is to promote flourishing lives. This premise, however, is not specifically a liberal one. Perfectionism becomes a liberal doctrine for Raz only once we consider the normative obligation to promote flourishing lives in the context of value pluralism. Indeed, notice that it is only by embracing value pluralism, and the related notion of autonomy, that Raz is able to adopt the perfectionist view of the state while remaining genuinely liberal. If he were a monist about the structure of value, meaning the view that the various values open to individuals could be ranked on one single scale, then it would follow that the perfectionist thesis about the role of state power would have decidedly illiberal connotations. Monism would imply that the state should promote whatever happened to be the most valuable way of life to the detriment of others. Only with the added assumption that there are many, incommensurably, valuable ways of life does the perfectionist view of state power lead to liberal conclusions.

Problems with value pluralism

The assumption of value pluralism is thus a critical one for liberal perfectionism. However, reliance on value pluralism also causes serious problems for Raz's account. In the remainder of the chapter I will outline two serious difficulties for Raz. The first is that he relies on implausible assessments of the relative merits of different ways of life. In particular, Raz's account is troubled by cases in which a way of life is closely connected to a religious or philosophical doctrine. Secondly, value pluralism makes assessments about the relative worth of different ways of life at times when liberals should wish to avoid making such judgements. In light of this, a liberalism based on value pluralism will inevitably rest on judgements that are deeply controversial, and as such becomes an inappropriate solution to the problems of pluralism.

The connection between truth and value

The first problem I will outline with respect to value pluralism, at least on Raz's account, is that it implies making an implausible assessment of the value of differing ways of life. In particular, I will argue that Raz's conception of value pluralism faces serious difficulties when we consider ways of life which are closely

connected to a religious or philosophical doctrine. Since these doctrines are some of the most widely held in society, and are at the heart of many of the most intractable disagreements, this problem represents a severe weakness of Raz's account.

As we have seen, the theory of value pluralism posits that there are a variety of different ways of life which are each actually valuable. This differs significantly from merely recognising that currently people view different, and incompatible, lifestyles as valuable. The claim of value pluralists is a metaphysical one, not merely a cultural or sociological observation. As William Galston (himself a committed value pluralist) states, 'value pluralism is offered as an account of the actual structure of the normative universe. It advances a truth-claim about that structure, not a description of the perplexity we feel in the face of divergent accounts of what is valuable' (Galston, 1999: p 770). Value pluralism is thus a theory that relies on robust metaphysical assumptions. Only if each of the differing options we face is actually valuable does value pluralism hold. Further, as I adumbrated above, Raz's account requires the different options we face to be of incommensurable value. I will now argue that both of these core assumptions are difficult to sustain in cases where different ways of life are reflections of religious or ethical disagreement.

To illustrate the problem for value pluralism, consider Galston's remarks regarding value pluralism's relationship to religious diversity. He states that 'There are some genuine goods whose instantiation in ways of life allows or even requires illusion. (For example, it is impossible for contradictory religious creeds to be equally true, but many help under gird important individual and social virtues. While self aware value pluralists cannot lead such lives, they must recognize their value. To demand every acceptable way of life reflect a conscious awareness of value pluralism is to affirm what value pluralism denies' (Galston, 1999: 774).

Galston is correct when he suggests that value pluralists must deny that only true doctrines or sets of belief can underwrite valuable ways of life. If only true doctrines could instantiate valuable ways of life the range of valuable options

would be much narrower than value pluralists suggest. They must therefore make room for the fact that false belief sets can still underpin valuable ways of living. However, the problem for value pluralists cannot be resolved as easily as Galston's remarks suggest. As I noted above, value pluralism is more than the simple assertion of a diversity of valuable options. Instead, a value pluralist must make the stronger claim that there is no way of decisively showing that any one of the many valuable ways of life is superior to the others. Therefore, value pluralists must claim that ways of life based on true beliefs cannot be shown to be decisively superior to ways of life based on illusion.

This claim is deeply problematic when faced by religious disagreement, especially when these religious doctrines are Salvationist in character. After all, if one religious doctrine were, in fact, the only route to salvation it would surely be a vastly more valuable way of life than the others. However, if this conclusion is granted then value pluralism breaks down, since the most valuable option would be whichever religion was in fact true. Further, note that it does not matter that it is very difficult to know which religion is true. As Galston's remarks earlier suggest, value pluralism is a claim about the actual structure of the normative universe. If one Salvationist religion is true and thereby superior to other ways of living, then value pluralism is false.

Therefore, when faced with a plurality of different doctrines which each claim to be the only path to salvation, value pluralists are thus faced with a serious dilemma. If any of these doctrines is in fact true then value pluralism is false. The only alternative would be to assume that all of these Salvationist religions are equally false. This would sustain value pluralism in so far as it is now plausible to believe that each of the many different religious, and secular, ways of life are each incommensurably valuable. This would be because none would be the route to salvation, and it is plausible to assume that false religious doctrines can still instantiate genuine values. However, assuming religion to be false is a non starter for liberal theory. While liberals can, of course, be atheists in their private lives, a public declaration of atheism would make the justification for liberalism profoundly antithetical to religious believers of all stripes. A liberalism justified in

this way would hardly present a solution to the problems of pluralistic society at all.

Further, the problems for the value pluralist analysis extend beyond religious examples. I focused on religious cases initially because that is the example selected by Galston, and because religious beliefs provide an easy case to show that the truth of a doctrine may be a strong determinant of the value of an associated way of life. Beyond these examples, it is important to note that these are by no means the only example of the connection between a way of life's value and the truth of a related doctrine. Even if we exclude belief systems that have otherworldly implications, it still seems problematic to believe that ways of life based on true beliefs do not have a significant, perhaps decisive, advantage over those based on false ones.

Consider this hypothetical example. Harry and Jeremy are both individuals who feel a duty to help others, and for both individuals this desire leads them to pursue a life in medicine. Harry decides to do this by going to medical school and later becoming a brain surgeon. Jeremy takes a very different path, and decides to practice homeopathy and a variety of different alternative medicines. This different career choice leads to the two individuals having very different lifestyles and worldviews. Harry's job as a surgeon leads him to develop friendships with very scientifically minded, hardnosed, empiricists. He also commands a high salary in the marketplace, which leads him to develop expensive tastes and an interest in costly activities such as international travel. In contrast, Jeremy's career in homeopathy brings him into contact with a very different community of individuals, who share a much greater emphasis on environmentalism and spirituality. Jeremy also has a much lower salary than Harry, which encourages a less resource dependent lifestyle; perhaps he learns to enjoy hiking or gardening.

We might grant that both these lifestyles, which are encouraged by the different career choices, embody different and independently valuable aspects of life. Harry will garner the benefits of travel and presumably have many interesting experiences unavailable to Jeremy. Jeremy may develop a greater appreciation for

nature and live his life at a more leisurely pace. As well as both being valuable, we might also assert that these valuable ways of life are incompatible within one life. The kinds of attitudes and beliefs required by Harry's lifestyle might lead one to reject major elements of Jeremy's. For instance, Jeremy might object to international travelling in so far he would thereby abandon his commitment to reducing his environmental impact. In so far as both ways of life are independently valuable but incompatible, this situation seems to fit the model of value pluralism. As such, a Razian account of liberalism would seem applicable in this case. Liberal perfectionists might say that both of these alternatives are incommensurably valuable, but that individuals would do best by choosing for themselves which option they find most appropriate.

However, merely characterising the situation as one of competing values ignores the root of the disagreement, which is their different beliefs about medical care. Jeremy's lifestyle choices are the direct result of a belief in the efficacy of alternative medicines and homeopathy. As we have seen, these beliefs are justified differently from Harry's; since Jeremy does not believe that double-blind tests, and peer reviewed science are the only useful ways to conduct medical study. On this issue, the two individuals thus have directly incompatible belief sets. Harry is committed to normal science and the methods that follow from this, and this belief leads him to reject the approach taken by Jeremy. In this, one of them must surely be closer to the truth than the other. Jeremy's homeopathic and alternative treatments might be highly effective despite their non-scientific justification or they may be virtually useless.

The important point to note here is that for both individuals, it is their belief in the truth of their position that leads them to pursue their chosen ways of life. In light of this, whether or not this starting belief is true has immense importance for assessments of the value of the differing lifestyles. Assume, for the sake of argument, that homeopathy and the alternative medicines practised by Jeremy are ineffective, and any benefit that his patients have shown is the result of a placebo effect. If Jeremy discovered this fact, we might expect him to be bitterly

disappointed, and seriously to question the worth of his life choices. For him, just as for Harry, the guiding motivation of his life was to help people in medical need.

Indeed, even if Jeremy never accepted that the treatments he offered were ineffective, we might still think that his life choices are undermined in so far as Harry's work has helped individuals in a way that Jeremy's never really did. Of course, asserting that the true nature of his beliefs makes Harry's lifestyle more valuable than Jeremy's does not imply that Jeremy's life had no value. We can fully accept that Jeremy pursued many valuable activities that Harry did not, and indeed that some of these activities were unavailable to Harry because of his attitudes. What the example does show is that, just as in the religious case, for many individuals the value of certain practices is directly dependent on the truth of certain beliefs.

Asserting equivalent value or incommensurability between these two ways of life is thus inappropriate. Therefore, in some cases the claim that a way of life is incommensurably valuable compared to other ways of living even though it might be based on an illusion is false. In many cases it is the truth of a set of beliefs which gives their associated way of life its value. As the case of Harry and Jeremy illustrates, these cases cannot be adequately dealt with through a value pluralist analysis, since in these cases the value of a life cannot be sustained if it is based on an illusion. Where ways of life are deeply intertwined with a set of beliefs, the value pluralistic analysis faces a serious problem. It is often true that we can legitimately point to values that are instantiated by ways of life based on falsehood. Indeed, it might well be the case that only a way of life based on such a falsehood would allow someone to pursue these values. However, these claims are insufficient for the value pluralist case. Instead, value pluralists must assert that there is no decisive way of ranking these ways of life, even though some are based on a correct understanding of the world whereas others are premised on illusion. In many cases, both religious and secular, this assertion looks unsustainable.

Value pluralism's conflicts with other doctrines.

The second problem with a value pluralistic analysis concerns not the metaphysics of this claim, but rather its political implications. Liberals who endorse a value pluralistic account of the nature of society often do not appreciate the extent to which this analysis conflicts with the tenets of many widely held doctrines. Put simply, since value pluralists must claim that many different ways of life are actually valuable they will thereby be at odds with any citizen who cannot or will not accept this. A liberal state premised on value pluralism thus rests on beliefs that are deeply antithetical to many of its citizens, and a liberal state justified in this way will reveal these controversial underpinnings through its policies.

To illustrate, consider members of Salvationist religions who believe that their faith is the only one that will grant access to Heaven or the afterlife. Such believers are defined by the thought that holding their set of beliefs is of enormous value, whereas holding other rival sets of beliefs is either empty or positively harmful. The assumption that all of the ways of life associated with rival doctrines are each valuable thus cuts against the core beliefs of these citizens.

While Salvationist religions may be the most difficult case, many citizens' doctrinal views imply that some of the ways of life in society are wrong or misguided. For instance, many religions teach that a homosexual life is one without value. Some vegetarians or vegans are committed to the view that lifestyles that include eating meat involve serious wrongdoing. Many widely held comprehensive doctrines thus prohibit or censure certain ways of life.

The negative attitude many citizens have towards the beliefs of rival doctrines constitutes a problem for the liberal perfectionist state because it will reveal its opinions on each of these topics through the design and actions of its institutions. Remember that the perfectionist goal is to promote valuable ways of life while discouraging empty ones. This aim leads to perfectionist policies such as promoting arts or high culture, while discouraging empty activities like gambling or drug taking. It follows from this that the reason a perfectionist state will treat different ways of life differently is a purported assessment of their actual value.

For instance, consider again Brighthouse's example of a homosexual child growing up in a conservative community in America that I introduced in the literature review. Brighthouse begins with the thought that the heterosexual conservative Christian way of life can be a valuable one. However, he argues that since a homosexual child cannot plausibly endorse this way of life 'from the inside' he cannot possibly flourish within it. Since the child cannot flourish in the conservative way of life, the good liberal state must give him alternatives. These other alternatives will include a whole host of different religious or secular ways of living which are structured such that the child can endorse them from the inside. Critically, if this is to be an actual improvement for the child then these other ways of life must be actually valuable. Thus, while Brighthouse suggests that the conservative Christian life is fully valuable, he also assumes that a whole host of other lifestyles which are more conducive to homosexuality are also valuable.

However, seeing the situation in these terms is deeply antagonistic to the beliefs of the parents. For them, their lifestyle is not merely one alternative way of living which exists on a par with a homosexual lifestyle. Instead, for some conservatives at least, a homosexual way of life is not a valuable one at all. While the language of value pluralism may therefore seem accommodating to diversity, since we accept that the conservative way of life is valuable, in fact it rests on assumptions deeply antithetical to this way of life. This is because value pluralism treats each way of life as simply one option amongst many.

Further, when a state is both value pluralist and perfectionist it will reveal its problematic theoretical underpinnings through its policies. For instance, if a liberal-perfectionist state does not treat homosexuality or meat consumption in the same way as it does other empty ways of life, say one of addiction to mind altering drugs, this can only be because it does in fact consider the homosexual or carnivorous way of life to be one with value. While both of these assertions may well be justifiable, they directly contradict those doctrines that posit that these ways of life are empty or wrong.

Therefore, a liberalism based on value pluralism will be forced to take a position on the most divisive issues within a pluralistic society. Whatever values perfectionist liberals assign to various controversial ways of life, it will be an assessment which directly contradicts the views of many of citizens. The justification of liberalism to these citizens can only proceed on the basis of denying claims that are central to their beliefs, which is a perilous strategy for a liberal theory attempting to respond to a pluralistic society like ours. Given the fact that any stance on these matters – on the nature, as Galston puts it, of the normative universe – will be deeply contested, basing liberalism on any particular account of value is deeply problematic.

Implications for the instrumental argument: Wisconsin vs Yoder

While I have considered the case of Raz in detail, it is useful at this point to reiterate that both of these difficulties stem from features that are inseparable from the liberal perfectionist account. Only the assumption of value pluralism stopped perfectionism from being a deeply illiberal creed, one that commits the state to promoting whatever is in fact the most valuable way of life. It is precisely this assumption, though, that leads to serious problems. A value pluralistic analysis of doctrinal conflict implies asserting an implausibly weak connection between a doctrine's truth and its value. Further, as I showed above, value pluralism is a theory that is antagonistic to the beliefs of many of the citizens of a liberal state, which undercuts its effectiveness as a solution to pluralism.

This critique of Raz's argument is important to my consideration of liberal education in so far as the core features of Raz's account are shared by some of the leading proponents of education for autonomy. Specifically, I will argue that the two problems which I highlighted in Raz also afflict the instrumental argument developed by Arneson, Shapiro and Brighouse. As discussed in the literature review, this argument was developed to show why autonomy ought to be

promoted even if it is not considered intrinsically valuable. Instead of being considered intrinsically valuable, autonomy is instrumentally valuable in so far as it leads citizens to select ways of life which are valuable and in which they will flourish. This instrumental argument is explicitly presented as a solution to the case of Wisconsin vs Yoder. In this section I will show how the two abstract problems I highlighted in relation to Raz also undermine the instrumental argument as a way of dealing with this real world example.

The argument put forward by Arneson and Shapiro rests on a simplified model of the situation in the Yoder case. This model is supposed to demonstrate the value to all children of being given a choice between the competing ways of life. The model simply assumes that each child is faced by a choice of only two options, which they term 'secular-worldly' and 'devout-withdrawn'. Following this, their model assumes that both of these ways of life are of equal value, but that some individuals are better suited to some rather than others. Given these assumptions, it follows that children who are able to choose between the two alternatives have a better chance of choosing a life in which they will flourish than those who are forced by their parents into either of the options. As such, all children benefit from a choice between being secular worldly individuals and living a life which is devout but withdrawn. Moreover, note that for Arneson and Shapiro the fact that an autonomy promoting education is beneficial to children is sufficient to support such a policy. Arneson and Shapiro thus hold a perfectionist view about the role of the state.

As my discussion of Raz suggests, my problem with this model is the assumption that each of the two ways of life are actually valuable. This assumption is not the same as the assumption that the religious and secular lives are equally reasonable or plausible. By claiming each way of life is actually valuable the authors make a metaphysical claim about the relative merits of the competing ways of life. As per Galston's phrase, they make a truth claim about the structure of the normative universe. Further, this assumption about the actual value of the competing ways of life is essential to the instrumental argument. Only if both alternatives are actually valuable does the instrumental argument hold. If one way of life was in

fact more valuable than the other, then children would be better off being taught whatever the most valuable option was.

Therefore, the instrumental argument shares two key features with Raz's account. It is perfectionist in its account of the role of state power, and it rests on a value pluralistic analysis of society. These assumptions leave the instrumental argument vulnerable to the two problems I identified in Raz's account. Firstly, the instrumental argument rests on an unconvincing metaphysical account of the situation, meaning it rests on a misguided attempt to assess the relative merits of the Amish way of life compared to others. Further, proponents of the instrumental argument are forced to make assumptions that are deeply antithetical to the Amish belief system. Relying on these controversial claims undermines the extent to which the instrumental argument can be seen as a useful response to this dispute.

To highlight these problems, note that the Amish do not advance their way of life as simply an alternative way of life to those pursued by the mainstream 'English' culture. Rather, they advance their way of life as uniquely lived in accordance with God's commandments. Thus, the nature of Amish practices is not derived from a belief that a simple way of life is better, or that community ought to be preferred over a more metropolitan existence. Instead, the Amish way of life is based on a strict interpretation of certain aspects of the Old Testament, collectively called the *Ordnung*.

The Amish thus exemplify the reasons why philosophical or theological doctrines are difficult to cope with on a value pluralist analysis. Their faith is advanced as a truth claim about the nature of God and the best way to respond to His existence. Their beliefs thus contradict many other doctrines, including those held by secular individuals and by members of different faiths. The Amish beliefs also commit them to the thought that many other ways of life pursued in pluralistic society are less valuable than theirs; indeed, that many are immoral.

Given that the Amish believe their way of life to be divinely inspired, it would be deeply antagonistic to suggest to them that their way of life was merely one of the

many possible ways of life open to individuals to pursue. Proponents of the instrumental arguments assert that individuals can live a fully flourishing life as an atheist individual in a large urban environment. Making this assumption is, in an important sense, to reject the heart of the Amish belief system. The assumption that individuals can live flourishing lives as atheists, or as members of different faiths, seems to deny the premise that God favours only individuals who dedicate themselves to one particular faith and its related way of life. Therefore, offering arguments to the Amish that begin with the premise that their way of life is just one amongst a series of options does not take their claims seriously. The instrumental argument seems guilty of a flaw Brian Barry pointed out in utilitarianism, in that it asks certain believers to 'Accept a way of regarding their own conception of the good that they could reasonably find repugnant' (Barry, 1995a, 161).

Therefore, the instrumental argument is far more antagonistic to the Amish than was originally suggested. This undercuts one of the chief advantages of the account, which was that it could avoid making unduly controversial assumptions. Indeed, for Arneson and Shapiro the instrumental argument was adopted because the assumption that autonomy is intrinsically valuable is inappropriate for consensual public policy. The authors argue that by defending autonomy in a minimal instrumental fashion they can avoid making claims which go against the beliefs of the Amish. They claim that, 'No assumption is made about the relative value of the options, but it is assumed that individuals differ in their traits such that for some individuals the secular life is better, and for some, the traditionalist way of life is better' (Arneson and Shapiro, 1996: 401). However, as we have seen, the problem for the instrumental argument lies precisely in the assumption that individuals can flourish in both ways of life. Indeed, in the quoted statement the authors make the further assumption that for some Amish individuals the secular way of life is better. As such, they do in fact rely on claims which place their argument at odds with the core claims of the Amish.

The second problem I highlighted in my discussion of Raz was that a value pluralist analysis would be forced to make dubious assumptions about the relative merits

of different doctrines. In my review of his arguments, I showed that this problem arises for Raz in cases where a way of life is intimately bound up with a philosophical or religious doctrine. This problem is particularly acute if the doctrine in question makes truth claims about the world that are at odds with those of other belief systems, as do the Amish.

Some aspects of Amish life could be viewed as fully valuable even from a secular perspective. For instance we might draw attention to the strong community spirit that the Amish way of life allows to flourish. Other individuals might be attracted to the slow pace of Amish life, or the agricultural nature of their activities. We could plausibly believe that their eschewal of modern technology is valuable, in that it reveals older methods of production that might test individuals in different ways.

However, any objective look at the Amish case must accept that some of the aspects of their way of life are deeply unpalatable when viewed from the perspective of someone who rejects their belief system. Examples here might be the patriarchal nature of Amish family life, with husbands having extensive authority over their wives. Perhaps even more troubling, there is the vivid nature of Hell that is portrayed to (often very young) children, as a real existing place to which sinners are sent in the after-life.⁶ The value of each of these pursuits seems closely related to the truth of the beliefs underlying it. If the Amish are correct about the implications of certain immoral behaviour, it will seem justifiable to ward children away from such actions at almost any cost. However, if the Amish are incorrect about the implications of a modern lifestyle, bringing children up with such a vivid and troubling account of hell looks deeply objectionable.

Thus, the Amish way of life cannot be regarded as simply one amongst a range of options. Rather, its value depends greatly upon our assessment of their belief system. Many practices may be justifiable if their theological beliefs are accurate,

⁶ Consider the following account given by an anonymous woman who left a Mennonite church in Wisconsin, she believed she would 'spend eternity in a napalm environment.' Further she noted that she lost connection with almost all of her family, and described her family's feelings of revulsion towards her as borne of the fact that '...what they see when they look at you is someone they love being tortured for eternity in a hell dimension'. Further, Emily is in fact a relatively mild case, since she left before being baptized. Amish who leave the church after being baptized are 'shunned' and face an absolute ban from communication with their family or community. (Shachtman, 2006;)

but are deeply misguided if they are not. Our judgements of how to regard the Amish way of life will thus reflect our opinion of the plausibility of Amish beliefs. The important point to notice for my account is that whatever our opinion of the Amish beliefs may be, we will find a value pluralistic analysis to be inappropriate. Asserting that the Amish way of life is equally, or incommensurably, valuable compared to a secular one either radically understates its value or radically overstates it. Therefore, attempting to resolve this issue, and surely many others, through a value pluralistic analysis is misguided and forces liberal theorists to make claims that are both deeply controversial and philosophically suspect.

Value pluralism's relationship to pluralism

This core argument of this chapter has been that liberal perfectionism is an inappropriate response to pluralism. This argument has moved in two broad steps. Firstly, I demonstrated that liberal perfectionism was intimately bound up with the theory of value pluralism. I showed this through a detailed study of the argument of the most influential liberal perfectionist, Joseph Raz. I showed that value pluralism was an essential part of his argument and of his understanding of autonomy. Without this assumption, perfectionism does not give rise to a liberal response to pluralism. Following this, I argued that the assumption of value pluralism is problematic. This is because it does not provide a convincing analysis of our societies when we consider cases of doctrinal conflicts. I highlighted two problems which were present for this account. These were that it required making implausible assessments about the relative worth of different doctrines, and that it commits the liberal state to positions that are at odds with those of many of its citizens.

The common cause of both of these difficulties is that value pluralism is itself one of the competing doctrines, which citizens might hold, and is thus inappropriate as a means of resolving tensions between these, often contradictory, doctrines. At root, those philosophical and theological doctrines which might be referred to as 'comprehensive views' consist of metaphysical views about the nature of the world and value judgements about the best way to live in that world. Some posit

the existence of God, and support a way of life that responds to this, others take a materialistic line and believe that the worth of a life ought to be measured in hedonistic terms; many others provide radically different answers to both of these accounts. Being a value pluralist commits one to a specific position in respect of both of these fundamental matters. To restate the quote from Galston above, value pluralism is a truth claim about the metaphysical status of the world. It holds that there are real appreciable values but that these values cannot be rationally ordered.

Taking a position on these fundamental issues is a fatal flaw in any prospective response to pluralism. Where societies are characterised by different faiths, creeds and philosophical outlooks, the liberal state cannot simply pursue one view at the expense of all the others. In particular, where a society is faced by religious and doctrinal pluralism, the state must be able to avoid assessments of the value and truth of opposing doctrines.

Attempts to respond to pluralism that begin with assessments of the value of each group are therefore ill considered. Judgements about the relative value of different ways of life are deeply contentious within pluralistic societies. By taking this route, liberals are forced to take a position on precisely those matters that divide society, and, as such, liberalism itself becomes a deeply sectarian doctrine. Granting that many different ways of life are valuable cannot assuage this worry; instead, a liberalism based on value pluralism rests on just as contentious a set of claims as any other comprehensive view.

Even the most committed opponents of liberal neutrality accept that we must avoid basing liberal politics on any one theological doctrine or deeply contested philosophical theory.⁷ Simply suggesting, however, that each of the different ways of life in pluralistic society is valuable does not achieve this goal. Instead, avoiding sectarianism implies taking a very different view of both the nature and the normative importance of pluralism. The next chapter will show how the very

⁷ See, for instance, Arneson (2003) and Chan (2000).

different understanding of pluralism and its importance developed in *Political Liberalism* are better able to respond to these worries.

Chapter 3 –The normative basis of a political liberalism

In the previous chapter, I highlighted the problems with describing pluralism as a conflict between independently valuable options. By ascribing allocations of value to different ways of life, liberals who adopt this strategy are forced to take a

position on precisely those matters which divide pluralistic society. Taking a position on these matters leaves the liberal state open to serious objections, and renders it unable to act as a fair arbiter in the disagreements which arise in pluralistic society. The problems with this framework offer strong reasons to understand some of the aspects of pluralism in terms of reasonable disagreement, with the units being contrasting doctrines, rather than differences between ways of life.

Crucially, the acceptance of permanent disagreement can be sustained, at least conceptually, without taking any position at all on the relative value of various ways of living, or on the truth of different doctrines. It is not inconsistent to believe that many different comprehensive doctrines are reasonable from a political point of view (with whatever consequences that might follow from that) and also to believe that only one of them is true, or indeed to have no view at all on which of them is true. The model of reasonable disagreement is thus a better device for responding to pluralism in two distinct ways. First, it correctly describes some of the most pertinent divisions in society - those between religions or worldviews - as divisions between doctrines rather than ways of life. Second, it allows us to take seriously the circumstances of pluralism by avoiding taking a position on the very questions which divide society.

The arguments raised thus far suggest that we should understand pluralism as persistent and often reasonable disagreement. This conclusion seriously undermines the strategy of 'education for autonomy,' at least in the form it is currently defended. As I showed in the previous chapter, this approach is intimately bound up with a value pluralistic analysis of pluralism. However, an acceptance that pluralism consists in permanent disagreement does not, in itself, lead us to endorse the political liberal model and the related view of 'education for citizenship'. We might equally conclude that it is the role of the state to ensure that citizens come to hold the one correct view, or at least to use education to minimise the number of disagreements between citizens.

Political liberals thus require an additional premise to show why the existence, and persistence, of disagreement ought to lead us to be neutral between the different doctrines citizens come to hold. In this chapter I will consider three different accounts of this premise. The first, epistemic strategy, asserts that reason is fundamentally indeterminate between many different options faced by citizens in society. This implies that there is no rationally compelling reason to choose one over the others. The state ought, therefore, to be neutral because many of the doctrines in society will be reasonably held, and selecting any one of them to promote above all others would therefore be unjustified. The second asserts that since citizens in a pluralistic society will come to hold different doctrines, we should not promote any one of them for fear of creating instability. While both of these views have attractions, and are sometimes applicable, neither is sufficient to defend liberal politics in the face of pluralism. To anticipate the argument, the first strategy seems to lead unavoidably into scepticism, a justification which would be deeply damaging to liberalism. The second strategy is empirically dubious and entails a worrying degree of pragmatism in the defence of liberalism.

While both of these accounts are sometimes suggested by Rawls' writings, neither is in fact the best understanding of his view. Instead, the requirement for the state to be neutral is justified neither on epistemic nor pragmatic grounds but is an explicitly moral obligation deriving from a view about the best way to view civil society. On my account, the argument put forward in *Political Liberalism* is that the state ought to be neutral because only in doing so is it able to sustain a normatively desirable relationship with all its citizens. This relationship does not depend upon citizens' actual consent, as the account from stability would suggest, nor does it depend on the citizen in question holding a philosophically plausible view as would be required by the epistemic route. Instead, the relationship between citizens and the political state is desirable because all can, in principle, grasp the reasoning given in favour of this set of institutions.

The purpose of this chapter within the broader thesis is threefold. It attempts to elucidate and explain some of the key concepts in *Political Liberalism*. I then defend the broad framework of political liberalism against some of its most

important critics. Since many of the concepts developed in *Political Liberalism* are important in my own account, any serious objections to this framework would also undermine my own theory. Finally, the chapter offers an argument to show why my interpretation of these concepts is preferable to others. This is of central importance to the wider project, since each of these differing understandings of political liberalism would have different implications for education.

Reasonable pluralism

The first possible strategy to defend political liberalism is an epistemic one. This argument begins with the notion that disagreement about ethics and theology is a permanent and inevitable feature of liberal democratic societies. It then explains this permanent disagreement by virtue of the fact that reason is simply indeterminate with respect to these questions. If this can be established, it seems natural to prefer a broadly neutral solution. If we cannot rationally show one set of views about the good to be superior to its rivals then the state would lack a compelling reason to promote this doctrine over others.

This strategy seems plausibly linked to *Political Liberalism* in so far as Rawls believes ethical and theological pluralism is an inevitable feature of modern societies (Rawls, 1993: 4). This imparts something special to ethics, theology and metaphysics, a fact that explains the persistence of disagreement. Thus there is, at least according to Rawls, a fundamental difference between issues of ethics and theology when compared to the natural sciences or mathematics. In the latter cases, the long term result of free debate and discussion is consensus. Progress is often slow, and there are different schools of thought, but, in the fullness of time, conclusions come to be accepted by the majority of participants. By contrast, debates about fundamental questions of ethics, or about the existence and nature of God, show no such signs of consensus. This constant disagreement forms the backdrop of life in liberal democracies, and creates a situation in which 'Many of our most important judgements are made under conditions where it is not to be expected that conscientious persons with full powers of reason, even after free discussion, will all arrive at the same conclusion' (Rawls, 1993 : 58).

The causes of this disagreement for Rawls are those series of considerations which he collectively terms 'the burdens of judgement'. The burdens include such considerations as 'the evidence- empirical and scientific- bearing on the case is conflicting and complex, and thus hard to assess and evaluate,' and that 'To some extent (how great we cannot tell) the way we assess evidence and weigh moral and political values is shaped by our total experience' (Rawls, 1993: 56).⁸ Taken together, these factors explain why the long run result of human reasoning is not to reach consensus in matters of ethics or philosophy.

The impact of the burdens of judgement is that disagreement over the deepest questions of ethics and philosophy is, in the long term, the inevitable result of human reasoning in the context of free institutions. Conversely, the only way to preserve a consensus on any one comprehensive view is to resort to the use of coercive force on those who hold alternative views. Rawls refers to this as 'the fact of oppression' (Rawls, 1993: 37).

Rawls' use of the term 'reasonable' is famously complex, but two senses in which he intends the word are relevant here. Citizens are reasonable if they both accept the burdens of judgement and are willing to propose and abide by fair terms of co-operation. The first criterion implies that, not only can we explain pluralism via the burdens of judgment, but that reasonable citizens must themselves accept the existence of these factors and their implications for liberal politics. The second criterion is that citizens are willing to propose and abide by terms of co-operation that other citizen's could, in principle, accept as fair. This entails that reasonable citizens recognise that reciprocity demands that they propose fair terms of co-operation. Proper liberal citizens recognise that no members of society can be denied their fair share of social production, although they reasonably disagree about the most reasonable set of economic agreements. Reasonable citizens will honour any agreements made in good faith.

⁸ The other burdens of judgement are that even when agents fully agree about the relevant considerations, they may disagree about their weight. Concepts are vague and subject to hard cases. Our differing experiences and finally that any system of social values is a choice from amidst the total set of value which might be realised. (Rawls, 1993: 54-84).

Understanding the burdens of judgement as implying that reason cannot reach definitive answers about metaphysics or ethics thus seems to yield a plausible strategy for justifying liberal neutrality. Given the limitations imposed by the burdens, many citizens will each hold views which are supported by valid arguments, and it is simply unreasonable to expect any of these views to be more rationally compelling than the others. In such a context, arguing that the state ought to employ perfectionist policies looks misguided, since the state would have to choose one of the many possible reasonable options and ignore or neglect the rest. Instead then, we must design our institutions to take account of all of the many reasonable views. The commitment to neutrality thus arises out an understanding of the operation of reason, not out of a more practical desire to please each conflicting group. Joshua Cohen frames this thought well when he argues that:

‘if we accept the idea of reasonable pluralism, then moral diversity is not simply a bare fact, even a bare general fact about human nature, but rather, indicates something about the operation and powers of practical reason. With this account of diversity, we have a response to the contention that accommodating different understandings of value in the formulation of basic moral principles is tantamount to supporting...that justice commands that we turn our money over to thieves. The response is that we are accommodating basic principles not to the reality of power, but, rather to the way that social reality reveals the powers of reason (Cohen, 1993: 280).

While this approach has its attractions- it both offers an account of the permanence of pluralism and why its existence ought to lead us to embrace liberal politics, it suffers two central drawbacks. The first is that these epistemic constraints, if they are to be powerful enough to underwrite a commitment to liberalism, will also lead to a serious scepticism about the possibility of any knowledge about the good at all. The second is that epistemic factors like these cannot possibly explain all of the different comprehensive views held in society and there is thus the problem of how to treat views which are not plausibly explained by the indeterminacy of reason.

The move from the epistemic strategy to scepticism seems difficult to avoid. If we argue that we cannot provide rationally decisive answers to questions of theology or ethics, we must concede that our own convictions on these matters are not fully supported by reason. In the case of *Political Liberalism*, a slide to scepticism seems suggested by Rawls' arguments which focus on the difficulty in weighing evidence, the complexity of this evidence and the existence of hard cases. By analogy, if informed scientists consistently disagreed about a certain principle, and cited the existence of hard cases, we ought to hold our own opinions on the subject with a degree of scepticism.

In his *Justice as Impartiality*, Brian Barry argued both that scepticism was implied by Rawls' views and that this did not pose a problem (Barry, 1995a: 188). Indeed, scepticism about the possibility of secure knowledge about the good underwrites his account of the justification of liberal politics. Barry's argument is that since no conception of the good can be held without reasonable doubt, some citizens can always reasonably reject the imposition of other's views on themselves. The result is that only impartialist liberalism can be legitimately pursued by the state (Barry, 1995a: 168-173).

However, while this type of scepticism might accentuate the appeal of liberal neutrality, it does so at an enormous cost. Most obviously, liberalism would again become a creed deeply antithetical to many citizens, in this case any who believed that they can legitimately endorse their conception of the good without doubt or uncertainty. Further, the suggestion that no conception of the good can be held with the sufficient force to underwrite public policy undermines the extent to which these doctrines can serve as guiding ideals within an individual's life.

In the case of an individual's life, some degree of scepticism does not appear to rule out acting in favour of a given ideal. The fact I have some doubts about a given set of beliefs does not in itself imply that I have not got sufficient reason to act upon them. Most beliefs are held with some degree of uncertainty, yet daily life requires acting on the basis of plausible opinions, not only those held with certainty. However, similar reasoning would seem to imply that the state could act

on the basis of claims which are reasonable but not held certainly. If Barry responds by showing why the level of scepticism that we should apply to these beliefs rules them out as a plausible basis for public policy then it is unclear how they can remain useful for the individual.

Barry might respond to this line of criticism with the thought that his model does not rely only on scepticism, but rather on the idea of reasonable rejectability and on the obligations we have to fellow citizens. Thus, he suggests that the most historically accurate description of his position may not be scepticism but rather latitudinarianism (Barry, 1995a: 169n). Barry quotes Barbara Shapiro as suggesting that the latitudinarians rejected both the sceptics' denial of the possibility of knowledge as well as believers who hold their faith as 'a zealous dogmatism which was overly confident in opinions that lacked adequate certainty and which, given the opportunity, would impose its opinions on others' (Shapiro, 1983: 110). On this account, Barry's arguments do not depend upon a brute scepticism about knowledge of the good but rather a special injunction against imposing beliefs on others.

In light of the special wrong of imposing our beliefs on others, Barry could coherently argue that we can hold beliefs with sufficient certainty to act on them as if they were true, but never hold beliefs with enough certainty to impose them on others. However, as insightful critics of Barry have noted, many pressing issues that demand public action arise out of beliefs with which many citizens disagree; the classic case being global warming or climate change. Matt Matravers and Susan Mendus note that our empirical doubts about this issue do not, necessarily, lead to inaction. They write that, 'We cannot know with certainty what the consequences of continuing to consume at current rates will be, and yet we do not deem that lack of certainty to be disabling.' (Matravers and Mendus, 2003: 44).

The case of global warming is one in which there is both (somewhat) credible doubt about the scale of the problem, a large number of reasonable citizens disagree about both the cause of the problem and the appropriate remedy, and in which any successful action would require nationwide, or perhaps even

worldwide, laws or institutional remedies. Many mundane areas of public policy face similar issues (consider defence policy or the response to drug use). Defending neutrality thus cannot be sustained simply via a special injunction against imposing beliefs on others; instead we must point to a special wrong in imposing certain kinds of beliefs on our fellow citizens. As I will argue in this chapter, I believe that such an account can be produced, but it must surely be formed from normative concerns that come from living together. In so doing, this argument moves sharply away from one in which the central premise in favour of neutrality is one of scepticism. Only by moving away from sceptical arguments can we avoid conclusions which would seem to suggest inaction in people's own lives or in matters of public policy.

In addition to the problem of inaction, appeals to scepticism leave liberalism open to the objection that it becomes self defeating. As has been pointed out by critics such as Simon Caney and Simon Clark just as there is disagreement about the good, there is also disagreement on matters of right (See Caney, 1995, Clarke, 1999). Barry's argument thus seems to imply that we should therefore also have scepticism about liberalism. Indeed, this kind of scepticism combined with liberal impartiality results in a debilitating formula. If the state cannot act on the basis of beliefs to which doubt applies, it seems difficult to see how it could act in any number of mundane situations. There is, after all, a plurality of opinions on virtually all questions relevant to public policy, and most liberal-democrats would accept that many of these differing views could be reasonably held. Therefore, despite Barry's sanguine attitude, political liberals ought to be extremely concerned about his suggestion that they are committed to an appeal to scepticism in order to justify their solution to pluralism.

Added to the sceptical implications, a second fundamental problem with the epistemic strategy is that it cannot explain enough of pluralism. While it might be plausible to think that, in some cases, reason is indeterminate between a variety of options, it is surely implausible to think that this explains the totality or even the majority of the different views held in society. Many doctrines held in our society contain contradictions, or do not seem supported by relevant evidence.

The presence of such views is not explained by an indeterminacy of reason itself, but rather by psychological or sociological factors. Thus we must consider what to do with citizens whose views do not seem to be plausibly supported or explained by epistemic considerations.

To illustrate the problems posed by citizens whose views seem unlikely to be supported by the best available reasoning, consider the argument put forward by Joshua Cohen. On Cohen's account a view is reasonable 'just in so far as its adherents are stably disposed to affirm it as they acquire new evidence and subject it to critical reflection' (Cohen, 1993: 280-281). This definition of reasonable will exclude the views of many different citizens. All manner of beliefs and values are often held in the absence of reflection. Particularly relevant to this thesis, these beliefs will often be those values and practices which are learned in the home or in childhood. While some individuals might consider it important to subject all of their beliefs to constant criticism, many others will be content to only alter their beliefs occasionally in response to events which cannot be explained by their existing set of beliefs. Some citizens might have entrenched loyalty to a certain doctrine and, thus, would affirm it in spite of the evidence.

Indeed, on closer inspection, Cohen's description of the notion of reasonableness is too weak for a plausible epistemic strategy. After all, it seems at least possible to hold a mad or irrational view while still subjecting it to critical reflection. The existence of such a view would still not be explained by a fundamental indeterminacy of reason, but rather by a failure on the part of the agent to see the implications of certain pieces of evidence. Looking at current liberal societies, the epistemic strategy would thus surely be forced to count very large numbers of citizens as unreasonable, either because they hold their views unquestioningly, or because they miss key pieces of evidence. While we might well have reason to hope that citizens do subject their views to reflection and that they do correctly assess evidence, to fail to do either or both of these things does not seem to be the kind of act that makes one unreasonable in the context of *Political Liberalism*. Steven Lecce makes this point well when commenting on the epistemic strategy. He argues that "philosophical enlightenment should not be a precondition of

moral status in a political society founded on the idea of a social contract.’ (Lecce, 2008: 173).

The kind of reasonableness which is relevant to inquiry or debate is not the same as political reasonableness. When deciding an individual’s political status, it does not seem to matter whether they hold their view for good reasons or not. Many citizens in liberal democracies believe that some (perhaps all) of the other views held in society are held without sufficient reason. This is their right, and in many cases their doubts about some of the views held by other citizens may well be warranted. Where liberal institutions step in is to say that, despite our doubts about the views of other citizens, we cannot legitimately treat them differently in political matters.

This equal treatment is an essentially moral commitment, not one which derives from doubt about our own, or others’, beliefs. A plausible liberal strategy must allow for cases in which we are totally certain that our own beliefs are superior to another set. This case seems unavoidable. There is after all a big difference between believing one’s own beliefs with certainty and being certain they are superior to an alternative. For instance, I may not be totally certain that I am right to be an atheist, but could still hold with certainty the thought that atheism is a more plausible account of the world than is scientology. Even in these cases, liberals would still believe that it would be wrong to impose my beliefs on a scientologist. This case shows that the kinds of reasons liberals draw on then are not epistemic ones. Instead, liberals cite the right of others to hold whatever beliefs they wish, even beliefs which are odd or implausibly justified. Thus in a liberal state, we count citizens as fully reasonable individuals even where their beliefs are implausible or incoherent.

The epistemic strategy thus appears to move unavoidably towards scepticism, and cannot deal appropriately with many of the disagreements in a pluralistic society. For both of these reasons, epistemic considerations alone cannot act as a sensible basis for liberal politics. Fortunately, the concept of the burdens of judgement need not be understood in this way. Instead, the burdens of judgement explain

the causes, and relevance, of pluralism in liberal societies as we are likely to find them. Recall that the subject of the burdens of judgment is the decisions that are made by free and equal citizens of a liberal society. These are defined as 'persons who have realized their moral powers to a degree sufficient to be free and equal citizens in a constitutional regime, and who have an enduring desire to honor fair terms of cooperation and to be fully cooperating members of society. Given their moral powers, they share a common human reason, similar powers of thought and judgment: they can draw inferences, weigh evidence and balance competing considerations' (Rawls, 1993: 55). As our experience of life in a liberal society tells us, Rawls is right to expect disagreement amongst such people over matters of theology and ethics.

We should not then view persistent disagreement in society as the result of the fact that some citizens are biased or, more fundamentally, that they are wilfully misrepresenting the evidence. Indeed, Rawls argues that viewing these unreasonable factors as the only causes of pluralism is liable to lead to 'mutual suspicion and hostility' (Rawls, 1993: 58). The burdens of judgment are introduced to explain why pluralism would arise even if we discount these factors. That is, 'The account of these burdens must be such that it is fully compatible with, and so does not impugn, the reasonableness of those who disagree' (Rawls, 1993: 55).

The relevance of the difficulties and complexity of the evidence available to us is that it explains why disagreement takes place in a way which is fully consistent with all parties continuing to behave as reasonable citizens. If the question of whether God exists were a trivial and simple matter then we would expect most citizens to come to similar conclusions. If citizens hold contrary beliefs on matters which are easy or obvious, we would have strong reason to suspect that they are behaving unreasonably. In reality, of course, the fundamental questions of ethics, theology and metaphysics are both deeply complex and profoundly personal. These factors imply that we would expect individuals to come to different opinions, even if none were biased, had based their opinions on faulty assumptions, or had made their claims in bad faith.

Showing that disagreement can still occur amongst individuals who are reasoning in good faith matters in so far as the claims made by such individuals differs fundamentally from the claims of individuals who are biased or engaging in wilful misrepresentation. In Rawls' terminology, the former are reasonable citizens whereas the latter are unreasonable. For Rawls then, 'being reasonable is not an epistemological idea (though it has epistemological elements). Rather it is part of a political ideal of democratic citizenship that includes the idea of public reason' (Rawls, 1993: 62). Thus, Rawls' strategy is emphatically not to assert that we simply cannot have justified knowledge about the good, or that reason is fundamentally indeterminate in such matters.

Seen in this light, the reliance on the burdens of judgment can overcome both of the problems with the purely epistemic strategy. The fact that we would expect citizens of liberal states to disagree even when they are reasoning in good faith does not have to imply a sceptical view about our own convictions. It is not contradictory both to recognise that some questions are so complex that we would expect disagreement and to remain fully convinced of our own answers to those questions. More fundamentally, matters like the role of faith in justifying beliefs, and how best to live in different contexts, are highly personal. This is not to say that ethically reflective individuals should not take seriously the views of other citizens and reflect upon their possible worth and insight relative to their own. The mere fact that many citizens hold a different view about God does not imply that we cannot hold our own view with confidence.

By elaborating a fundamentally sociological claim, rather than an epistemic one, political liberals have a much more persuasive way of classifying citizens. The purely epistemic strategy faces a serious problem in so far as each citizen is classified as reasonable or unreasonable depending on whether their views are supported by fully valid arguments. By contrast, if we view the burdens as having normative implications, citizens are classified as reasonable depending on whether they possess the two moral powers to the requisite degree. That is, whether they are able and willing to co-operate on fair terms with one another.

Classifying citizens as reasonable on the basis of the two moral powers has two distinct advantages over the epistemic approach. Firstly, the Rawlsian account will cover a much broader section of citizens. Many people are fully cooperating liberal citizens despite holding some views which are philosophically dubious. Secondly, this strategy offers much more persuasive reasons for counting someone as unreasonable, with all of the consequences that might follow. The epistemic strategy counted citizens as unreasonable simply if they have made mistakes in argument or weighing evidence or were not prepared to subject their view to constant revision. The normative strategy counts citizens as unreasonable if they are unwilling to participate fairly with others. This seems a much more compelling reason to doubt the validity of their claims regarding the use of public power.

Stability

A concern for social stability is naturally a central one for philosophers concerned with the emergence and permanence of pluralism in society. Most liberal responses to pluralism have their historical roots in the wars of religion that occurred in Europe during the 16th Century. In our own time, religious disagreements are cited as causes in many of the most pressing problems in both global and domestic politics. These problems have become a major topic of interest, particularly in the wake of the terrorist attacks against America on September the 11th which seemed to intersect with religious differences.

George Sher, in his wide ranging critique of liberal neutrality, effectively captures the essence of this stability based approach. He summarises this view as follows, 'When a society is composed of different religious, cultural or social groups, some are bound to want to impose their conceptions of the good on others, while many others are bound to resist. In this way, any pluralistic society contains the seed of destabilizing conflict. To avoid such conflict, we are urged to place all efforts to promote the good strictly off limits.' (Sher, 1997: 107)

Issues of social stability are thus undeniably important and seem amenable to neutral solutions. They therefore seem a natural basis for a defence of political liberalism. On this model, the state cannot risk associating itself with any one

section of society and instead plays the role of arbiter and peacekeeper between the various competing doctrines. However, despite these attractions, a more detailed examination of the notion of social stability shows it to be a flawed basis on which to found liberal politics.

The first problem with the stability strategy is that while social stability is certainly a real issue in liberal democracies it is sometimes exaggerated in importance. George Klosko remarks that 'Brief reflection will reveal that, virtually without exception, the industrial democracies have been remarkably stable for more than fifty years (Klosko, 2000: 205). Empirical evidence thus suggests that features of democratic constitutions render them inherently stable, and that in the past it was usually only serious external crises (or perhaps internal political excesses) which threatened their survival. Given this, he argues that Rawls' pursuit of the stability of liberal democracies under favourable conditions is somewhat superfluous. The societies Rawls addresses are likely to remain stable even in the absence of his theoretical solutions.

Furthermore, if social stability is our primary concern, liberal neutrality seems a somewhat misguided route to achieving what we want, particularly neutrality between the abstract philosophical theories that Rawls is concerned with. Questions of how to secure social stability ought to be concerned with what factors lead individuals to obey the law and act in a civilised manner towards one another. A cursory consideration of issues relevant to the social stability of liberal democratic states would thus consider issues such as drug abuse, organised crime, entrenched poverty and racial disharmony. Some aspects of the pluralism of society are relevant to these discussions, in particular religious and ethnic tensions. For the other aspects of pluralism Rawls discusses the connection to social stability seems far weaker, if such a connection can be plausibly asserted at all. For instance, discussions of whether utilitarianism or value pluralism can be reconciled with liberal principles seem entirely misplaced in this context. The theoretical problems which are central to this text thus seem tenuously related, at best, to issues of social stability.

The initial problem with the notion of social stability is thus that it seems too weak to serve as the basis for liberal politics. It is weak in the sense that it is not obviously a pressing concern for liberal democracies and also in the sense that, even if it is a concern, it does not seem to push us decisively in the direction of liberal politics in general and political liberalism in particular. Furthermore, citizens may well support a state overall even if they disagree with its underlying reasoning. The fact that some citizens disagree with their state on one single issue, even one of high importance, does not mean that they will suddenly become a problem for social stability. Most citizens of liberal democracies resolve political disagreements through peaceful means even when they have profound disagreements with their governments over matters of the highest importance.

Beyond this, grounding a defence of political neutrality on a concern for social stability is a move open to serious normative objections. Questions of social stability are essentially pragmatic ones. When we theorise about how best to secure social stability, the relevant considerations are working out who the actors are who are most likely to undermine stability and what reasons are most likely to persuade such actors to refrain from so doing. The pragmatic nature of this goal implies that neutrality may well not be the most appropriate response. We might be faced with a situation in which a powerful group demands that the state favour its principles in some way. The best way to secure stability in such cases might be to accede to these wishes. Conversely, where a group is weak, social stability may not be particularly undermined if the state ignores their claims even where those claims are normatively valid.

Therefore, the concept of social stability cannot possibly be sufficient to support the commitment to neutrality. Most liberal states are stable enough to cope with most foreseeable circumstances, and many citizens will still be willing to accede to the actions of the state even if they disagree with some of the reasoning underlying its decisions. Even if there were a problem with social stability, neutrality of the kind advocated by Rawls seems entirely misplaced. Problems of civil strife are unlikely to be caused by Kantians or Utilitarians who believe the state is acting contrary to their comprehensive view. Moreover, premising liberal

politics simply on the search for stability seems to entail a worrying pragmatism, bending the state to whatever powers are most able to disrupt it.

Given the importance of stability to *Political Liberalism* this would seem to be a serious, perhaps fatal, set of problems. However, what is sometimes unappreciated by critics such as Klosko is the extent to which Rawls uses an atypical notion of stability. This is suggested by the context in which he introduces the search for stability, he states that ‘the problem of stability has played very little role in the history of moral philosophy, so it may seem surprising that an inconsistency of this kind [Rawls’ belief that the account of stability in *A Theory of Justice* was deficient] should turn out to force such extensive revision. Yet the problem of stability is fundamental to political philosophy and an inconsistency there is bound to require basic adjustments (Rawls, 1993: xvii)’

This might seem a puzzling statement from Rawls. Political discourse often considers questions of stability, and it seems a topic that has occupied the thought of many leading philosophers. Brian Barry succinctly responded to this argument in the following terms, ‘Perhaps it is true that the actual word ‘stability’ has not been used commonly in the history of political philosophy, though the Oxford English Dictionary traces uses of it in a social and political context back in the fifteenth century, citing Malory writing on the ‘stabylyte of the realm’. But all we have to do is rechristen the problem of stability as the problem of order and we can immediately recognize it as a central focus of political philosophy in all periods- but especially, of course, at times when order is particularly problematic’ (Barry, 1995b : 880).

The problem with these critiques is that Rawls views stability in a different sense from its usual meaning. For Rawls, stability is a property of conceptions of justice, which he defines thus ‘Systems are more or less stable depending upon the strength of the internal forces that are available to return them to equilibrium (Rawls, 1971: 400)’. The system Rawls is concerned with is, of course, the basic structure regulating the well ordered society, and the equilibrium for these institutions is them operating in a just fashion. The problem of stability for Rawls

is thus whether the just institutions he envisions will remain just in the face of the changing circumstances which inevitably face societies over time. This was his understanding of the meaning and importance of stability in *A Theory of Justice*. There he stated that 'The stability of a conception of justice does not imply that the institutions and practices do not alter. In fact, such a society will presumably contain great diversity and adopt different arrangements over time. In this context stability means that however institutions are changed, they still remain just or approximately so' (Rawls, 1971: 458).

This definition of stability explains remarks that would otherwise be somewhat puzzling in *Political Liberalism*. For instance, Rawls writes that the argument for stability comes in two stages. In the first part citizens select principles of justice without knowledge of human psychology. In the second, they ask whether these principles would be stable, a question he defines as whether a systems of justice 'generates in its members a sufficiently strong sense of justice to counteract the tendencies to injustice' (Rawls, 1993: 141n). Clearly a tendency to injustice would define the problem of stability if we understand stability as applying to systems of justice. However, there are many incidences of injustice that have little or no consequences for the problem of social order (e.g., tax evasion which is done in, and remains, secret).

Likewise, consider Rawls' statement that 'if a conception fails to be stable it is futile to try and realize it' (Rawls, 1993: 142). This statement might plausibly be understood as referring to stability in the sense of social order, if a conception of justice was known to produce severe and persistent social strife then we might think we have good reason to avoid attempting to enact it, whatever its other merits. However, very few conceptions of justice would be open to such objections. World history suggests that a vast number of different systems of government can be pursued without collapsing into anarchy. Understanding stability as applying to notions of justice makes much better sense of these remarks. On this account, a threat to stability opens up the possibility of futility since any attempt to produce a just society will end in a less just one.

On my understanding of Rawls' account of stability then, suggesting a regime is unstable does not mean that it is liable to collapse into anarchy. Instead, an unstable system is one in which forces exist which would tend to disrupt a society's adherence to its own stated principles of justice. If these forces were sufficiently strong, it would follow that no society could exist in accordance with these principles of justice over time, since any attempt to follow these principles would gradually become less just. This conclusion, much more than the mere possibility of severe strife or anarchy, seems better described as a rendering the pursuit of a given conception of justice as futile.

While stability in the Rawlsian sense may impact upon social order, and is thus a related notion, it is a distinct concept. Incidences which might severely affect the continuation of the justice of a society may have little or no impact upon whether citizens obey the law, or the presence of civil strife. For instance, consider a situation in which a liberal state passes laws which discriminate against a small minority group. If this group had little power, and was generally peaceful, such a law might cause no instability at all in the sense of crime or protests. It would not then be a threat to stability conceived in terms of order. However, in so far as discriminatory laws represent a liberal state becoming less just, then instability is present by the definition that Rawls uses. Thus liberal states which have a tendency to react in an unjust way to external events, say immigration or terrorism, are less stable than those which respond in a way that is more in keeping with underlying liberal principles.

These arguments thus show that Rawls understands the term of stability in a very different way from that in which some critics have suggested. This conclusion is interesting beyond its importance in understanding the text of *Political Liberalism*, since on my account the question of stability is a much more pressing one, and one much more amenable to political liberal solutions, than Barry and Klosko suggest. On my account the paradigm problem for *Political Liberalism* is not social unrest caused by religious division, but rather certain sections of society passing laws informed by their own comprehensive conception of the good which undermine our shared liberal institutions. Seen in this light, it becomes clear why

Rawls thought that a problem with his account of stability necessitated an extensive reformulation of justice as fairness, since were there a problem of stability it would imply that liberal institutions would not be likely to remain just over time in the face of pluralistic society. Since reasonable pluralism is the inevitable result of free institutions, this implies a fundamental flaw in the original Rawlsian project. Therefore, regardless of whether it is best discussed under the rubric of 'stability', the question driving *Political Liberalism* is one of fundamental importance.

The second key aspect of Rawls' notion of stability is his insistence that stability must exist for the right reasons. Rawls introduces this notion while elucidating the imperative which drives the search for stability. He argues that 'Finding a stable conception is not simply a matter of avoiding futility. Rather, what counts is the kind of stability, the nature of the forces that secure it...we try to show that, given certain assumptions specifying a reasonable human psychology and the normal conditions of human life, those who grow up under just basic institutions acquire a sense of justice and a reasoned allegiance to those institutions sufficient to render them stable' (Rawls, 1993: 142).

On this view then, the achievement of a stable set of liberal institutions is insufficient for a fully just liberal society. Instead, only if those institutions are just over time, because citizens themselves act to keep them so, can we achieve the appropriate form of stability for a liberal regime. Thus for Rawls the notion of stability is different to our usual use of the term. Most often an assessment of stability is essentially an empirical matter. For instance, we would tend to think that stronger foundations make a building more stable. By contrast, for Rawls, the notion of stability is an explicitly normative one and is only met when the right forces secure stability.

Some critics have appreciated this strongly normative dimension of Rawls' account of stability, yet still questioned whether strict neutrality is necessary to reach this objective. For instance, Simon Caney recognises that, for Rawls, a stable state is one 'that is willingly consented to by its citizens' (Caney, 1995: 262). Nevertheless

he denies that even this sense of stability might require neutrality. Instead, he recommends a state that secures stability on the basis of a 'rainbow coalition,' in which the state pursues a series of different perfectionist policies, each of which is designed to placate one section of society. In such a way, a state might have the consent of all its citizens in a pluralistic society without acting in a neutral fashion.

Where this argument goes awry is that it mistakes what Rawls believes to be the correct relationship between both the state and its citizens, and between citizens themselves. For Rawls, not only must the state be able to explain its actions in terms that citizens could reasonably be expected to accept, but citizens must be able to justify their public actions toward each other in terms of public reason.

In a society characterised by reasonable pluralism, only reasons which do not depend on the truth or falsity of any comprehensive view could possibly be shared by all citizens. Thus only justification provided by public reasons could possibly form the basis for a debate or dialogue that is truly society wide. The 'rainbow coalition' idea ignores this, and would imply that the various sections of society were, crucially, closed off to one another. This would undermine a core aim of political liberalism, creating a unified society able to debate and consider questions together, despite their different comprehensive views. On the model proposed by Caney citizens from group A cannot possibly debate the relative merits of the policies which are applied to group B, since they do not share a common standard of reasoning. For members of group A, many policies pursued by the state will be unintelligible and unjustifiable and are permitted only because they buy the loyalty of group B to the institutions of the liberal state. Thus, while each section of society may well consent willingly to the actions of the liberal state, this stability exists for purely pragmatic reasons not because all citizens believe its institutions are appropriately justified.

Therefore, while there is undoubtedly a need to secure social stability, a task made more difficult by religious or ethnic pluralism, this aim is not the primary goal of liberal politics. Merely attempting to placate each of the many different groups in pluralistic society would make liberalism 'political in the wrong way' (Rawls, 1993:

40), giving unjustified weight to the claims of the powerful or the unreasonable. Furthermore, it is doubtful that such a goal underwrites neutrality, since many non-neutral actions have only a negligible impact on social stability.

By contrast, there is a much closer link between the goal of a state which is stable for the right reasons and a neutral state. We begin with the plausible assumption that very few policies or institutions which rest upon a comprehensive view will be able to command unanimous agreement amongst all of the reasonable citizens in a pluralistic society. While it is wrong to assume that comprehensive doctrines are never in agreement with one another, it seems reasonable to assume that a state which is justified by any single comprehensive doctrine would meet serious objections from adherents of other views. From this it follows that the only legitimate way to justify liberal principles is for them to be based exclusively on public reasons, which as we have seen are defined as those that will be acceptable, in principle at least, to all reasonable citizens.

Therefore, once we understand properly the notion of stability and its relationship to the notion of liberal legitimacy, we see that only a state justified in terms of public reasons will meet the test of legitimacy. Moreover, understanding the notion of stability in this way shows that a properly legitimate liberal state possesses a series of attractive features. In its ideal form, all citizens in a political liberal state can appreciate the reasons that are given for public policies and the makeup of constitutional essentials. By contrast, if we base public policy on any one of the comprehensive doctrines found in society its reasoning would be alien to other citizens found in society. The Rawlsian ideal of stability thus captures the ideal that a truly just society remains just only if each citizen understands and endorses the system of laws to which they are subject and does not do so merely because they represent a useful compromise as in a *Modus Vivendi*, or because they gain more than they lose as in Caney's 'rainbow coalition'.

The moral basis of Political Liberalism

The initially plausible suggestions of both the epistemic strategy and the search for stability are thus open to fatal objections. Neither offers either a secure basis for

liberal politics or a compelling account of the importance of pluralism. The epistemic approach seems to lead inexorably towards doubting our own convictions. Such scepticism about the good is a deeply unhelpful basis for liberal politics. Furthermore, this epistemic strategy faced a problem in the form of the many citizens whose views cannot plausibly be assumed to rest on the best available evidence.

The second strategy focused on the question of stability. While I noted that there would be some instances in which concern for stability would lead to a preference for neutral politics, this strategy is ineffectual in a wide range of other cases. Many liberal societies do not face serious problems of social stability, so would lack the motivation to pursue neutral policies on this account. Moreover, even where states do face a problem of stability, it is far from clear whether neutrality provides the best response. While liberal neutrality might sometimes ameliorate problems of religious or ethnic tension a concern for social stability certainly cannot underwrite the kind of philosophical neutrality, between different abstract accounts of the nature of goodness, as advocated by Rawls. Finally, I noted that the argument from stability is premised on objectionably pragmatic considerations.

Given the problems with these two strategies, neither is appropriate as a basis for political liberalism. Neither offers us a compelling account of how to deal with the diversity we find in modern societies. In order to avoid the problems facing both of these strategies, I attempted to show how Rawls could offer a different defence of political liberal principles. I showed that the burdens of judgement need not imply scepticism, once we recognise that they represent a normative and sociological claim rather than an epistemic one. The difficulties plaguing the search for stability are ameliorated once we consider Rawls' unusual use of the term, and the fact that stability is only achieved if it exists and endures for the right reasons.

Therefore, instead of a picture of an acceptance of pluralism driven by a deep scepticism about the good, or a need to secure peace between warring factions, the notion of neutrality put forward in political liberalism is explicitly moral. We

begin with the notion that citizens in a liberal state will forever disagree over matters of the highest good or ethics. This is not because holding justified knowledge about these matters is impossible, but simply because given the personal and complex nature of these issues citizens are bound to disagree. This poses a problem in so far as we are concerned about the forces that secure the permanence of the liberal state. Rawls argues, rightly in my view, that, as liberals, we cannot be content if liberal institutions survive only because of the preponderance of force which they hold, or because they represent a convenient *Modus Vivendi* between different religions or creeds.

Since we are concerned with securing stability for the right reasons, we must be concerned with what circumstances must obtain for citizens to accept liberalism for moral, rather than prudential, reasons. It seems reasonable to think that individuals will not accept liberal institutions if they promote a comprehensive view which they do not share, since this would imply that the state is basing its policies on reasoning that is alien to them. The combination of the burdens of judgement, understood as the fact of disagreement amongst liberal citizens, with the search for stability for the right reasons, thus explains the character and implications of the liberal principle of legitimacy, which for Rawls is that 'the use of public power is only fully legitimate if it can be justified by reasons citizens could reasonably be expected to accept' (Rawls, 1993: 136).

This notion of legitimacy matters because, as liberals, we ought to care about the reasons citizens have for endorsing their state. The just society does not endure because it represents a *Modus Vivendi* between warring factions, or because each citizen has been bought off by the state. Rather, the state endures because enough citizens recognise that liberalism represents the fairest solution as to how to live together. Once we add the assumption that citizens who live under free institutions will always disagree, it follows that the only way to act in accordance with this principle of legitimacy is to avoid relying on any one comprehensive doctrine.

Therefore, the argument for neutrality comes as a direct and unavoidable consequence of the fact of reasonable pluralism if our goal is truly to secure a legitimate state which is stable for the right reasons. Since this argument is premised on the moral significance of disagreement, not its epistemic causes or its practical consequences, it can thus escape the critiques advanced by Sher and the other critics of political liberalism that I have considered.

Liberal neutrality and education

This concludes the investigation into the foundational theories of liberalism. I began by outlining the theories of perfectionism and political liberalism which dominate the debate amongst liberal theorists. I argued that liberal perfectionism suffers from serious flaws due to its reliance on the theory of value pluralism. This weakness was shown to have important consequences for educational debates, since value pluralism is a foundational premise of the instrumental argument developed by Brighouse and Arneson. Characterising pluralism as the existence of many differently valuable ways of life undermined the response open to these theorists, and implied that the liberal state would adopt positions that were both antagonistic to many of its citizens and, often, simply implausible.

Thus the first lesson of this section is that pluralism must be viewed as the persistence of disagreement, not as the existence of many different valuable options, although I do not deny that this may also be the case since value pluralism is one of the many reasonable comprehensive doctrines. Alone, the fact of disagreement carries no normative significance. In some cases, the correct response to disagreement is to ignore the claims of some parties; this would be the case if individuals were behaving unreasonably. To assess the normative importance of pluralism, I considered two different strategies by which we might respond to the persistence of disagreement in liberal societies.

The first attributed this disagreement to the fundamental inability of human reason to produce definitive answers in matters of ethics or metaphysics. The

second route used liberal neutrality as a means of securing social stability. Both of these strategies were rejected. In their place, I argued that the best defence of political liberal principles rested on normative considerations. Given that we must accept that citizens of liberal societies will disagree over matters of ethics or theology, we ask what significance this has. It is important in so far as the state is simply the shared power of all citizens, and ought not to act in ways they could not reasonably accept. Given the existence of disagreement, only a neutral state can be endorsed for the right reasons by citizens across many different sections of society.

This conclusion has significance for education. Most obviously, accepting that some version of political liberalism is the most appropriate response to pluralism entails that the account must be developed in accordance with the liberal principle of legitimacy. This implies that educational institutions cannot rely explicitly on the content of any single comprehensive view.

Further, exploring the best defence of the political liberal framework shows which considerations ought to be relevant in assessing any scheme of education. Citizens are considered reasonable if they are willing and able to participate in a fair scheme of cooperation. Where we have reason to suspect that individuals are not willing to act fairly towards other citizens, namely where they are behaving unreasonably, we have good cause to reject their claims regarding the appropriate use of public power.

However, as we have seen, we should not though treat citizens as unreasonable simply because we believe their comprehensive views to be philosophically dubious; these epistemically unreasonable citizens are just as much a part of society as philosophically sophisticated individuals. Nor should we use education to secure stability at any cost. What matters is not simply securing blind allegiance, but rather that the citizens of a liberal state can come to endorse their shared institutions because they understand that those institutions represent a fair solution to the circumstances of pluralism.

Therefore, this section has set out an account of both what pluralism is, and why it matters. Pluralism consists in disagreements between individuals about how best to understand the world and to live in it. These disagreements do not arise out of only bad faith or bias, but are the natural result of life under free institutions, even if all parties are fully reasonable. This disagreement matters because it is fundamentally important that citizens can understand and, in principle, endorse the reasons that guide the actions of the state. Since no comprehensive view can serve as such a public basis of justification, we must instead justify policy in terms of public reasons which can be understood by citizens across the overlapping consensus. When taking these ideals into the sphere of education, the relevant goal is thus designing institutions that are justifiable to all members of the political community and that enable children to come to act as reasonable citizens who endorse liberal principles for the right reasons.

Section 2

Understanding Political Liberalism in Education

Chapter 4 –Parental Authority in Political Liberalism.

Defining the scope and extent of parental authority has been a perennial issue in liberal theory. Historically, this question was addressed by core figures of the liberal tradition such as Locke and Rousseau.⁹ These issues remain live questions amongst contemporary political philosophers and have prompted a myriad of diverse theoretical positions. The reason for the continuing interest in parental authority is that the parent –child relationship has features which are not shared with any other in modern society, and is a relationship which can appear troubling in the light of core aspects of liberal thought.

A defining tenet of liberal theory is that individuals ought to be free to shape their own lives. This theoretical commitment gives rise to the legal rights of free movement and association. In a functioning liberal state, citizens cannot impose their beliefs on others but must attempt to change minds by persuasion or argument. The parent-child relationship differs significantly from this liberal paradigm. Parents have significant rights of control over the lives of their children, and can legitimately make important decisions that affect those lives. These rights of control imply that parents wield enormous influence over their children's development. Through the selection of school, by choosing which community children grown up in, and by controlling many other early influences, parents can guide their children towards accepting some ideas while rejecting others.

From a liberal perspective, the authority wielded by parents over their children is complicated by the fact that it is non-voluntary. Obviously, individuals cannot choose the family into which they are born. Nor, except under the most exceptional of circumstances, can they voluntarily choose to leave one family and join another, or to live alone. The parent-child relationship is thus non-voluntary, of immense importance, and backed by coercive force. Each of these aspects is troubling to liberals, in so far as they have often attempted to justify the use of coercion through the actual or hypothetical consent of the governed.

⁹ Perhaps the most notable text dedicated to these issues is Rousseau's *Emile* (1762).

One possible way of justifying the authority of parents is to posit that parents own their children in some sense. On this account, parents are legitimately allowed to use their children for almost any purpose or to teach them whatever values they wish. However, the assertion that one individual can own another, akin to a relationship of slavery, is deeply counter-intuitive to modern citizens. As such, this ownership based account has been comprehensively rejected by almost all contemporary liberal theorists (for instance, see Archard, 2002: 142-160).

Instead, contemporary accounts of upbringing have usually focussed on the value of parenting to the children themselves, and used this value to justify a variety of different ways of understanding the role of parents and the basis for their authority. One leading strategy compares the parent-child relationship to the fiduciary relationship that obtains between lawyers and their clients. On this account, parental authority is justified because children lack the ability to live independently and to make autonomous choices. They thus need someone to make these choices on their behalf. As such, parents only have the authority to act in the best interests of their children, although in practice they will have wide latitude to decide what these interests consist in (Noggle, 2002, Reich, 2002).

Another leading account, developed by Harry Brighouse and Adam Swift, locates parental authority in the value of the parent-child relationship to both parties (Brighouse and Swift, 2009). They argue that children will likely flourish only if they have a secure relationship with one or two adults, and that many adult's lives will go much better if they are able to raise a child. Since this relationship requires a high degree of intimacy, privacy and partiality, parents must be given wide leeway if this relationship is to prosper. The limits of legitimate parental partiality are thus those necessary to sustain this relationship.

Debates between these differing accounts of upbringing are thought to have important implications for two critical issues for liberal philosophy. The first is distributional. Many parents wish to further the welfare of children in ways that might cut against the distributive aims of liberal egalitarians. So, many might send their children to expensive private schools, use connections or networks to further

their careers or leave them large sums of money as an inheritance. Liberal theory thus needs a way of showing the limits of these actions, and to differentiate those instances of parental partiality which are legitimate from those which ought to be banned or somehow redressed through the tax system.

For the purposes of this enquiry a more important issue is the scope of the legitimate authority of parents to shape their children's beliefs. It seems natural to think that the question of how far parents can pass on beliefs depends upon a prior question of the justification and scope of parental authority. Thus we might expect that theorists who endorse a robust notion of parental authority will also argue that parents have a wide leeway to inculcate whatever values they choose. At the extreme, those few theorists who believe parents own children will allow the parents to shape the values of their children with almost no constraints. Brighouse and Swift allow parents to take their children to Mosque or Sunday school, but with the proviso that these children also encounter other systems of belief. By contrast, some theorists who reject parental rights altogether argue that parental freedom to pass on their beliefs is much more constricted, and that parents cannot legitimately inculcate their own beliefs in their children.¹⁰

In much of the literature, then, the question of how far parents ought to be able to pass on values is thought to be determined by the basis of parental authority. However, I believe that this assumption is misguided. At least for political liberals, the basis of parental authority is in fact largely irrelevant to the separate question of how far parents ought to be able to pass on their beliefs. While the scope of legitimate parental authority is still a significant question, in light of the distributional issues, it is thus in fact a largely irrelevant one for this enquiry.

To show this, the argument in this chapter will proceed in three parts. The first is to show that the political liberal principle of legitimacy implies that the state cannot take a position on which non political values children ought to learn in school and at home. Despite the arguments of some theorists, this restriction

¹⁰ For an example of an account which premises a ban on inculcation of values on a rejection of fundamental parent's rights see Hannan and Vernon 'Parent's rights, a role based approach' (2008)

applies only to the actions of the state; as such some other actor might legitimately shape children's values and beliefs. The second section argues that there are strong reasons to think that children ought to have an authority figure of this kind within their lives. Section three argues that there are other elements of political liberalism, chiefly the search for stability, which create strong *pro tanto* reasons in favour of letting a child's parents take up this role.

Taken together, these arguments show that political liberals are, in most cases, committed to giving parents significant control over their children's non-political education. This commitment to parental control, and the absence of a state mandated curriculum designed to promote ideals relevant to non-political life follows directly from deep seated aspects of the political liberal project. Crucially, the presumption in favour of parents does not depend at all on a premise about parental authority. As such, altering this position will require re-evaluating core aspects of the political liberal position.

Legitimacy and parents

Recall that the political liberal principle of legitimacy states that the use of public power is 'fully proper only when the reasons we offer for our political actions may reasonably be accepted by other citizens as justification of those actions' (Rawls, 1993: xlvi). As I outlined in chapter three, it is this principle which implies a move to a purely political liberalism. Under conditions of pluralism no comprehensive view will be accepted by all reasonable citizens, thus none can serve as the basis of public justification. Instead, we must appeal only to public reasons, and as such invoking the tenets of any one comprehensive view when designing educational institutions is illegitimate.

At least in theory, an education geared only towards the civic concerns of the state can be pursued in accordance with this principle. The role of education on this model is to secure stability for the right reasons. Of course, in practice the use of education for this purpose will be subjected to serious criticism, perhaps from parents who wish to withdraw their children from school altogether. However, these parental objections alone cannot imply that civic education is illegitimate.

While political liberals should aim to accommodate differences of opinion where possible, when legitimate interests of the state are present there may be grounds to overrule the claims of some citizens. It is not actual consensus that is sought by political liberalism, but rather ensuring that political actions are justifiable, in principle, to all reasonable citizens.

In the ideal world envisioned by political liberals all reasonable citizens will be part of an overlapping consensus. This implies that despite their divergence on matters of the good each citizen will be able to endorse liberal institutions from within their own comprehensive view (Rawls, 1993: 133-140). Since the aim of civic education is the stability and endurance of this liberal settlement, we can assume all reasonable citizens will be in favour of civic education. Thus while many parents will object to civic education in practice, there still seems room for the liberal state to enforce a curriculum designed to promote stability without invoking the tenets of any one comprehensive view, and therefore this policy can meet the test of liberal legitimacy.¹¹

However, while liberal legitimacy will permit an education designed for civic purposes, it seems to rule out any attempt by the state to foster values to guide children's non-political lives. If we object to parents teaching children values which we think are misguided, or beliefs which we think are unjustified, we must surely do so by invoking a different set of beliefs and values and asserting that they are superior in some respect. Promoting any set of non-political values will thus require the state to take a position on precisely those controversial issues which Rawls sought to avoid. By allowing a child's adult guardian to take the lead, the liberal state is seemingly able to bypass this problem by refusing to favour any one set of parents' views above the others. Allowing different sets of parents to teach different sets of non-political values does not involve a relative judgment about any of these values. The state does not condone or condemn any of these

¹¹ Harry Brighouse has argued that the liberal principle of legitimacy ought to rule out using education to guide children towards accepting liberal values (see Brighouse, 1998). He argued that the most plausible interpretation of the principle of legitimacy requires both the hypothetical consent of all individuals, and the actual consent of a majority of citizens. Since this actual consent cannot be achieved if children have been guided towards liberalism, such civic education would become illegitimate. However, political liberals have responded forcefully to this charge, pointing out that legitimacy does not require actual consent (See Clayton, 2006). Rather, legitimacy requires democratic government which in fact compatible with citizenship education. As such, an education designed to create reasonable citizens would be a legitimate one.

different ways of raising children, and maintains a posture of neutrality by avoiding these questions altogether.

Therefore, the belief that the state should not intervene in children's upbringing (except to ensure political reasonableness) follows directly from core aspects of the political liberal position. As such, it is unsurprising that it is a view shared by other prominent political liberals such as John Tomasi and Bruce Ackerman.

Tomasi writes that:

'Political liberals, but not ethical ones, are bound to defer to the wishes of parents when reintegrative questions arise for developing children. There is no one else, from the political liberal perspective, with the standing to fill that crevasse' (Tomasi, 2000: 97). For Ackermann, so long as parents are able to provide their children with a relatively coherent upbringing, a requirement he argues to be minimal, he believes they ought to be able to raise their children in whatever way they wish. (Ackermann, 1980:139-163)

In both cases, this view about the upbringing of children is a consequence of the principle of legitimacy for the same reasons that I outlined in my discussion of Rawls' account. For Tomasi, the state is incapable of guiding children's development because it cannot privilege any one comprehensive doctrine. For Ackermann, citizens cannot object to any particular method of upbringing without making claims based on their own comprehensive view, which is impermissible on his model of justification. As such, for both authors, as long as a scheme of education meets the civic standards required by political liberalism it will be permissible. Thus, far from being an idiosyncratic aspect of Rawls's account, the lack of state involvement in upbringing follows directly from core aspects of the political liberal position.

Therefore, one critical implication of the principle of legitimacy is that it rules out attempts by the state to shape children's non-political values. Indeed, for some theorists its implications for education and upbringing go much further. Most notably, Matthew Clayton argues that just as the principle of legitimacy applies to

the actions of the state it should also apply to the conduct of children's adult guardians (Clayton, 2006: 87-112). He believes that those features of the state which necessitate that it be bound by the principle of legitimacy are also found in the parent-child relationship. As such, this principle should bind parental actions as well. In Rawlsian terms, he argues that the family should be considered part of the basic structure of society. If this contention is accurate, it would follow that the family should be subject to the same set of limits as the institutions of the state and the other conventions and practices which define the background conditions of society. To show the similarity between the relationships of state and citizen and parent and child Clayton draws attention to Rawls' criteria for what defines the basic structure, and notes that these features are also present in the relationship of parent and child.

The most important criteria which define the basic structure, Clayton argued, characterise that structure as coercive, non-voluntary and as having an influence on life prospects right from the start. Clayton is right to point out that these features also seem to be present in the parent child-relationship. Specifically, children do not choose which family to be born into, and are therefore subject to their parents' authority in a non voluntary way. This authority is, at least possibly, coercive in nature. Children cannot leave their family, and the institutions of the state give parents the right to act to keep them there. Finally, it seems fairly obvious that the family a person is born into will affect life chances right from the start.

For Clayton, these similarities imply that there is a parallel between the parent-child relationship and that which obtains between citizens and the state. The implications of this argument would be a radical change in the way we view legitimate parental conduct. As he says, 'In our parallel case, then, liberal legitimacy insists that parental conduct should be guided by principles that do not rest on the validity of any particular reasonable comprehensive doctrine. The ideals that guide parents must not, for example, be secular or religious ideals' (Clayton, 2006: 95). Clayton's position thus implies that parents ought not to be able to pass on any comprehensive view to their children. He believes that

common religious practices such as baptism or circumcision are illegitimate. Likewise, he believes parents ought to refrain from attempting to inculcate into their children ethical and political beliefs such as vegetarianism or socialism (Clayton, 2006: 107).

While Clayton is persuasive in arguing that the parent-child relationship is similar to the relationship between the state and its citizens, he ignores critical differences between the two cases which imply that his 'parallel case' argument is eventually unsuccessful. While parents do indeed wield enormous authority over their children, this authority is not final in the same way as is the state's. Parental authority is itself superseded by the authority of the state, which can step in to alter or even break familial relations if they are judged to be harmful to the child. This means that older children can make claims to the state if they feel their parents are acting in a way which they find profoundly unacceptable. Given the final authority of the law and government, this possibility does not exist with regards to the state.

Secondly, and most importantly, Clayton's parallel case argument misunderstands the reasoning behind the principle of legitimacy, and indeed the broader project of *Political Liberalism*. While 'non-voluntary' and 'coercive' describe the basic structure, and underpin its importance for philosophical theorising, they are not in themselves the reason it is subject to the principle of legitimacy. Instead, the principle of legitimacy derives from the fact that the power of the state is in fact the shared power of citizens themselves.

Rawls argues (rightly) that liberals should not view the state as an independent power with authority over citizens, but rather as the pooled power of citizens themselves. This is one of his general facts which apply to societies like ours. He argues that 'In a constitutional regime political power is also the power of equal citizens as a collective body' (Rawls, 1993: 250). It is precisely because political power is the shared power of citizens that the principle of legitimacy applies to actions of the state. Since the state is the pooled power of everyone, its actions

must be justifiable to all. The criterion of public justification rules out any attempt to govern on the basis of a single contested comprehensive conception. A government based on such controversial ideals cannot be justified to citizens who endorse radically different, but nevertheless still reasonable, comprehensive ideals.

In this regard, the role of parents within families is fundamentally different from the role of the state within society. A family is not a cooperative venture formed between equal citizens. Instead, it is a group formed by relations of intimacy in which some parties occupy a fundamentally different position to others. Most importantly, the parallel case argument breaks down because whatever the similarities between children and citizens, children do not yet have comprehensive views of their own. As described above, the injustice of a sectarian state consists in the fact that citizens would be required to live in accordance with comprehensive ideals that they do not share. Since children, at least very young children,¹² do not have comprehensive views of their own, it is impossible for a similar injustice to be done to them.

Parents, or other adult guardians, thus stand in a very different relationship to their children than that of the state to its citizens. Since it is the nature of the relationship between the government and the governed which justifies the principle of legitimacy, these differences undermine the parallel case argument. Therefore, parents face a very different set of circumstances than does the state, their authority is less final and it is justified for different reasons. For each of these reasons the parallel case argument is overstated. There certainly are similarities between the parent-child relationship and that which obtains between the state and its citizens, but these similarities are not sufficient to support the conclusion that each should be subject to the same normative constraints.

¹² The age of children may well be relevant here. While it seems certain that toddlers do not have beliefs which could sensibly be called a comprehensive doctrine, it is also likely that elder children do have such beliefs. This fact does not impugn my general conclusion that the principle of liberal legitimacy would allow parents to shape their child's beliefs. However, it might mean that older children had some claim of justice if their parents ignored their sincerely held beliefs, for instance by refusing to serve special meals to children who have decided to become vegetarians.

Thus, while the principle of legitimacy has important consequences for the upbringing of children, they derive only from its implications for the actions of the state. Since the state cannot take a position on matters of the good it cannot assess the relative merits of different sets of non-political values. It is therefore unable to guide children in their choice amongst these values. This limitation is one which is applied specifically to the state, because this body represents the shared power of citizens, as such this constraint does not apply to other individuals or organisations. Thus, the principle of legitimacy forbids the state guiding children's upbringing but keeps the door open for another actor to take this role.

Intimacy

A consideration of the implications of the principle of legitimacy thus shows that adults –whether parents, communities or other institutions – can legitimately inculcate values into children, so long as those children are still able to act as reasonable citizens. However, showing that a policy is legitimate does not show that it is necessary or sensible. While adults can legitimately guide children's development, it might still be the case that there are good reasons to stop them from doing so, and to conclude instead that children should be left to develop independently, or that they should be raised in large institutional settings. Either of these models could also meet the test of legitimacy since they could be formulated in a way that would not privilege any one comprehensive doctrine.

However, while the principle of legitimacy is silent as between these competing methods of raising children there are other strong reasons to prefer children being raised primarily within a small family unit within which there is a clear hierarchy. This family unit need not be based around a child's parents, and certainly need not include their biological parents, but in practice would probably have to be led by a single adult or small group of adults. These adult guardians must be committed to a child's wellbeing and will hopefully come to share a close relationship of intimacy with the child as they grow up.

Such an authority figure is beneficial in two distinct ways. Firstly, we have good reasons to think that children's lives will go much better if they have a guide through development. This figure can provide a consistency and stability which would otherwise be lacking. Further, giving adults responsibility for children is vital in developing a relationship of intimacy in the child's early life. The second reason we have to favour this arrangement is that supporting these relationships of intimacy between carers and children is important for the civic aims of liberal education. In the context of political liberalism, such an authority figure will be a key player in the early stages of the development of the sense of justice.

An adult authority figure with a coherent set of beliefs and a plan for children can be a valuable shield against what would otherwise be a very confusing world for children. As they grow up, children will inevitably be exposed to a great many influences, some of which will point in different directions. For instance, many individuals are concerned with the amount of violence and sexuality that children are exposed to through popular culture. While the law attempts to discriminate between the items that can be shown to children and adults, in practice this is difficult to enforce. In the age of the internet, many children have access to material intended for individuals much older than them. The fear is that these aspects of popular culture popularise or glorify a certain, self destructive, way of life. In addition to music and television, children are likely to encounter adherents of all manner of different faiths and creeds and to be encouraged by some of them to adopt aspects of these world views.

The traditional role of parents or guardians is to guide children through development in a way that is consistent. To achieve this, adult guardians can (try to) block access to certain items until an appropriate age, take children to certain places and away from others, and perhaps intervene in the relationships a child has with their peers or other adults. Each of these actions will obviously require significant authority over children. The adult authority must have the final say over where children can go, with whom they can associate, etc.

Moreover, these interventions will only produce a more coherent upbringing if the adult acts in accordance with a plan, which will necessarily involve assumptions about human flourishing and the good. Thus, creating a more consistent upbringing can only be achieved if parents both have significant authority over their children and are able to act to promote one (often contested) view of the good life. In guiding children's upbringing, adults must decide which relationships are likely to be valuable to children, and which might be dangerous or undermining of their future flourishing. In the case of younger children, they must choose which activities should be promoted and which discouraged.

In a wide variety of mundane cases, these choices have virtually no relevance to the goal of forming children's sense of justice. For instance, this might include decisions about whether to enrol children in music courses or sports classes, or whether to allow them to see certain films. Instead of being choices which are civically relevant, these are choices which depend almost entirely upon our opinion on matters of the good. Since we live in a pluralistic society, parents will inevitably disagree about the correct responses to these questions. Some might consider music an important part of life that allows for self expression, others might disagree and believe that being engaged with sports is much more valuable. Likewise, there is unlikely to be a consensus on which cultural influences are in the best interests of children. However, no parent could possibly sidestep many controversial issues which arise during upbringing. Attempting to do so would only exacerbate the inconsistent messages sent to the child. Instead of trying to satisfy all sides in the debates over, for example, the appropriate age for children to develop intimate relationships, parents must raise their children in the way that seems best to them. This is with the proviso that they are willing to explain their decisions to their children, and that their decisions are based on accessible reasons. Thus, the importance of a coherent upbringing supports allowing a child's guardian to act on the basis of their own comprehensive doctrine.

In addition to providing consistency in upbringing, having a single authority figure is greatly beneficial towards developing a relationship of intimacy in children's early lives. This relationship of intimacy, with the child vulnerable to the actions of

the adult, is important in children's development. This importance is stressed most compellingly in the work of Schoeman, for whom protecting and defending this relationship of intimacy ought to be the primary goal of our family policy. He writes that:

'For the infant, the family as here defined involves an intimate relationship with at least one adult. Since the psychological evidence suggests that children need this kind of relationship for their cognitive and emotional wellbeing we may conclude that children must be provided with such an arrangement' (Schoeman, 1980: 10).

The empirical research Schoeman stresses the importance of children coming to have a close and affectionate relationship with an adult as they grow up. This relationship of intimacy is beneficial across a number of measurable indices of children's mental and emotional development. In the context of political liberalism, accepting the importance of this relationship does not depend upon advancing a single comprehensive doctrine. The importance of love and nurture in early years, usually between parents and their own children, is common across the vast majority of different cultures and faiths, and is thus found in a multitude of different comprehensive doctrines. Its value can thus plausibly be assumed as part of the overlapping consensus.

Schoeman convincingly argues that sustaining this relationship of intimacy requires a relatively small number of guardians who are able to act as an authority figure in children's lives. This is because the relationship will need to be largely private from others, and as such beyond the ability of the state or society to watch closely or to censure. Only if parents are able to view most of their decisions as final and beyond revision are they able to act independently. Of course, such privacy need not be total or unquestionable. There are a whole variety of things which individuals in a liberal state cannot do to one another under any circumstances, such as violent or abusive conduct, and these limitations apply to parental conduct as well¹³. Nevertheless, unless most choices are made in private

¹³ At this point, some commentators may wish to insist that there are legitimate differences between the rights against abuse

it is difficult to see how a relationship of intimacy could thrive in the necessary way.

There are then good reasons to think that having a single authority figure in children's lives, one who is permitted to advance her own comprehensive doctrine, is both legitimate and provides great benefits to the children themselves. In addition to these benefits to children, the civic goals of liberal education are also aided by having children's upbringing guided by an adult guardian. Indeed, it is notable that parents or other adult guardians play a key role in Rawls' account of the development of the sense of justice. He writes that:

“In light of this sketch of the development of the morality of authority, it seems that the conditions favouring its being learned by the child are these. First, the parents must love the child and be worthy objects of his admiration. In this way they arouse in him a sense of his own value and the desire to become the sort of person that they are. Secondly, they must enunciate clear and intelligible (and of course justifiable) rules adapted to the child's level of comprehension. In addition they should set out the reasons for these injunctions as far as these can be understood, and they must also follow these precepts insofar as they apply to them as well. The parents should exemplify the morality which they enjoy, and make explicit its underlying principles as time goes on. Doing this is required not only to arouse the child's inclination to accept these principles at a later time, but also to convey how they are to be interpreted in particular cases.” (Rawls, 1971: 466).

Rawls' account of children's development sketched out here explicitly borrows from the work of child psychologists such as Maccoby (Rawls, 1971: 465n). For both theorists, the initial development of children's impulse to behave as morality requires comes from mimicking the behaviour of their parents. The first step of this account is a relationship of intimacy and affection between the child and their guardian. Indeed, the affectionate nature of this relationship is explicit in Rawls'

held by children compared to those held by adults. For instance, many believe that smacking children is appropriate in a way that smacking adults is not. Personally, I am not persuaded by this distinction, but I do not wish to develop that argument here. Instead, note that even if there are some legitimate differences between the ways we can treat children this would clearly not licence the most troubling kinds of abuse or neglect.

account. He writes that 'the child comes to love the parents only if they manifestly first love him' (Rawls, 1971: 463). The love felt by children motivates their desire to emulate the behaviour and values of their parents. A relationship of affection and intimacy between parents and their children is thus the first building block in the development of the sense of justice

As we have seen above, developing this relationship of intimacy is itself dependent upon allowing the adult guardian significant authority over children's lives and allowing them to make many decisions in private. In the context of Rawls' account, the benefit of this private relationship is that children will come to understand that it is their guardian, rather than some remote state authority, who makes many decisions on how they spend their time. This guardian will also be the prime figure who enforces moral norms, and should be on hand to explain the reasons which guide this moral scheme. As such, the guardian is critical in children coming to understand the justification for morality and justice, rather than their obeying rules merely because they emulate others or see the prudential benefits of doing so. Indeed, the sense of justice is defined as an acceptance of the duties of justice for principled reasons rather than simply carrying out one's obligations for pragmatic reasons. Specifically, Rawls defines the sense of justice as 'an effective desire to act from the principles of justice and so from the point of view of justice' (Rawls, 1971: 567).

Thus far, I initially showed that careful consideration of the principle of legitimacy showed that adults could legitimately act to guide the development of children's comprehensive view. Following this, I argued that there are independent reasons in favour of children having such a guide through upbringing. Such a guide can provide consistency in the messages and influences children receive, which in turn helps to sustain a vital relationship of intimacy in children's development. Finally, having such a guide is critical to the civic purposes of political liberalism, since such a guide plays a key role in the development of children's moral personality and sense of justice. Taken together, these reasons seem far more powerful than any which could be advanced in favour of institutional upbringing of children, or a

system by which guardians raise children but have significantly less control over their lives.

The importance of respecting families for stability

The discussion so far has shown that allowing an adult or group to guide children's development is both permissible and provides several important advantages. However, neither of these arguments show who such a guide should be. This final part of the chapter will argue that, other things equal, there are good reasons to let parents play this role in children's lives. To some, who might take it as common sense that parents are more qualified to act as their children's guardian than other adults, this argument might seem somewhat superfluous. However, in fact there are serious challenges to the view that parents have such a strong claim over their children.

We might reflect for instance on the relative arbitrariness of genetic bonds in establishing claims of ownership or priority of care. This might be taken to show that merely because a parent gave birth to a child does not imply that she is best qualified to raise him, or even that there are strong normative reasons in favour of allowing her to raise him. However, denying a strong notion of parents' rights does not, in itself, answer the question of who should raise the children in society. All it shows is that we should not automatically presume that children ought to be raised by their parents.

In place of this presumption in favour of parents, one possible way to assign parenting duties would be a standard of adequacy. At its most extreme, we could think that children should be raised by whoever is best qualified to raise them. Put this strongly, this principle is vulnerable to what Hannan and Vernon term 'The Plato worry', in that this principle seems to licence the state to carry out mass redistribution of children (Hannan and Vernon, 2008: 174). A more modest, and therefore appealing, principle is simply to suggest that parents must ensure that children meet an adequate standard of wellbeing or lose their parental rights.

However, while this principle is intuitively plausible, it is a standard which the political liberal state simply cannot adopt. Judgements about the merits of different schemes of upbringing will, inevitably, require comparisons between different comprehensive accounts and their implications for children's welfare. This is of course precisely what is forbidden by the principle of legitimacy.

This does not imply that any actions by parents will be permissible. The state can act against parental neglect or abuse without invoking the tenets of a contested comprehensive doctrine. What it does mean is that where parents have a developed plan of upbringing the state cannot intervene on the basis that some other comprehensive doctrine is superior. As such, in many cases, the state is in no position to compare the choices made by parents to those of other parents or groups.

A model of adult authority premised on children's welfare is thus a non-starter for political liberals. Instead, we must base such an account on values and goals which do not depend upon any contested comprehensive view, and can thus be endorsed within the overlapping consensus. One such important goal is that of securing the assent to liberalism of as many different individuals, and hence different doctrines, as possible. Other things being equal, political liberalism should always try and be as inclusive as possible. The point of political liberalism is to make liberal principles acceptable to individuals who hold a wide array of different views. Of course, this aim does not mean that we should alter liberal principles to cater to citizens who are clearly behaving unreasonably, but it does mean that the presumption should always be in favour of accommodating diversity of opinion rather than imposing any section of society's view on the rest. In this light of this goal, it is important to consider the value many adults place on having children and in guiding their development. Recognition of this fact shows that there are strong reasons to allow them to act as their children's guardian.

Many, if not most, parents will wish to pass on important beliefs and values to their children. After all, most individuals believe their beliefs and values are not merely one possible set of beliefs and values but rather a particularly good or right

one. Given the intensely close relationship which often obtains between parents and their children, parents will usually have a far stronger connection to the choices that their children make compared to those of other members of society.

Added to these wishes of parents, many comprehensive doctrines also provide reasons to allow parents the prime role in children's upbringing. For many religious comprehensive doctrines there are pre-established rituals and practices which govern the inculcation of beliefs to the next generation. These range from symbolic gestures of faith, such as circumcision, to the inclusion of children in religious teachings by taking them to Mosque or Sunday school. Indeed, many comprehensive doctrines actually require parents to inculcate certain values into their children. For instance, at a baptism ceremony parents pledge to bring up good Christian children. As such, believers of these doctrines might feel they are failing in their duties if they cannot raise their children in this way.

In a sense, both of these factors are contingent on the actual wishes of individuals in society and the comprehensive doctrines we are likely to find there. That is, we could imagine individuals who want all individuals to hold their beliefs, and place no special significance on guiding their children's development. Likewise, we could imagine comprehensive doctrines that command inculcating values into randomly selected young individuals rather than one's own children. The argument from stability to parental control thus does not apply in every conceivable case.

Nevertheless, given the actual doctrines and individuals we are likely to find in society the balance of reasons will, in most cases, favour allowing parents to take the lead in raising children.

An obvious objection at this point is that this account is political in the wrong way. The charge is that in allowing parents to raise their children because of the benefits to stability, my account bends political principles to the realities of political power, rather than attempting to find a reasonable consensus between comprehensive doctrines. The implication would be that my account is guilty of letting parents guide their children's development not because it is in the child's best interests, or for some other principled reason, but merely because the

parents wish to control their children's upbringing and it would be a problem for the state if this wish was denied.

The problem with this line of thought is that, as I have shown, the political liberal state cannot legitimately judge what is in children's best interest in many cases. By allowing parents to take the lead in upbringing we are not bending what would otherwise be the just course towards that which is pragmatically required. Rather, this is an area in which the state cannot legitimately prefer one course over another. As such, there will often be no countervailing reason against allowing parents to raise their children as they see fit, while there are clear benefits to stability if the state does allow this.

Ceding children's moral and ethical education to parents is thus a natural step for political liberalism. If we accept the principle of legitimacy we cannot also accept a model of state-sanctioned parental authority based on furthering children's best interests. Accepting a child centred view of the role of parents requires a developed account of children's interests against which we could assess the value of various different schemes of upbringing. Except in relatively easy cases, such as abuse or neglect, creating such a model will require assessing the merits of competing comprehensive doctrines, which of course is beyond the purview of the political liberal state. Since we cannot assign the role of guardian on the basis of children's interests, we must look for other relevant factors which do not depend upon assessments of different comprehensive doctrines. A critical factor here is the importance of the role of parents to many individuals and widely held comprehensive conceptions. Blocking parental wishes risks casting liberalism as antithetical to these widely held and deeply ingrained understandings about the role and authority of parents, a move that would be deeply detrimental to Rawls' wider project.

Conclusions

Taken together, consideration of these three issues creates a compelling argument for letting parents guide their children's development, so long as they meet the civic requirements of political liberalism. To recap: I began with a consideration of

legitimacy, and showed that this implied that the state could not take a role in the development of children's non-political values, since it could not legitimately favour any such set of values over another. This requirement applied only to the state, and as such other actors in society are still able to play such a role.

The importance of having such a guide to development is given by the need to have a consistent upbringing, which is helpful for children in developing their own comprehensive view of the world. Within the framework of political liberalism, having development led by a single individual (or group) is the first step in the development of the sense of justice. Therefore, political liberal principles both permit individuals to guide children's development and give us strong reasons to want them to do it.

Finally, I showed that, other things being equal, political liberals have good reason to think that parents should be this guide within children's lives. This is not because of any claim about ownership or the genetic bond between parents and their children, but rather focuses on the value of achieving stability for the right reasons. Passing on values to children is a central component of many comprehensive doctrines, as well as a strong desire of many parents. If political liberals opposed parents passing on values to children they would thus become hostile to these views, or force their adherents to make radical changes to their tenets before being admitted to the overlapping consensus. Doing this would undermine the ecumenical nature of the project, and should be avoided if possible. Since political liberals can have no decisive reason to favour any particular scheme of upbringing, these other reasons will usually be decisive in favour of letting parents take the lead. Although this is always with the proviso that parents will raise children who are able to act as reasonable citizens.

Two points emerge from these discussions which are important for the broader project. The first is that this argument for parental control flows from central components of the political liberal position. The desire to include as many diverse doctrines within the liberal polity as possible favours giving parents a relatively free hand, bound only by the shared civic goals of the liberal state. Most

significantly, the principle of legitimacy limits the scope of the state to challenge parents' wishes, since to do so may require favouring one comprehensive conception over another. The deference to parental wishes is thus not an accidental or easily modifiable aspect of Rawls' position. It seems unlikely political liberals could show how a set of values to govern children's non-political lives could be promoted by the state without violating the principle of legitimacy. As such, the state lacks grounds to challenge the views passed on by parents.

The second point is that this argument holds independently of any account of parental authority or genetic reasons to favour giving authority to a child's parents rather than to other adults. Indeed, my account would apply even if we assume that parents have absolutely no natural rights at all to make choices for their children. Even on this, rather extreme, view it would still be the case that having an adult guide children's development has many important benefits. As we have seen, for political liberals the state cannot legitimately pursue this goal, thus some non-state actor must thus be found.

At this point, many theorists would argue that decisions should be made by the party best able to make choices that will be in a child's best interest. However, given the political liberal principle of neutrality, the state cannot assess the merits of different sets of non-political values, and thus the decision must be made on other grounds. A powerful reason which applies here is that giving this role to parents is highly beneficial towards the goal of creating a society which is stable for the right reasons. There is thus a compelling case for ceding children's upbringing to their parents that would hold even if we were to assume that being a child's biological parent has no moral weight at all.

This conclusion is significant for both the shape and content of the thesis. Because theories of parental rights do not affect the implications of political liberalism for children's upbringing they are irrelevant to the scope of this thesis. Of course, this is not to say that such work is irrelevant to other areas of inquiry; settling these questions is vital to the distributional issues I mentioned earlier and will still be of importance to theorists who reject the political liberal principle of legitimacy.

Nevertheless, the argument of this chapter explains why contested theories of parental rights are not discussed in detail within the thesis, despite their seemingly close connection to the overall topic.

As well as determining the issues discussed in the thesis, this argument has important connotations for the continuing argument. I have shown in this chapter that the preference in favour of parental control follows from the central goals of *Political Liberalism*, the impetus to create a society which is stable for the right reasons. Further, I have demonstrated that because the inclination to favour parents follows from the search for stability it is a conclusion which applies independently of theories more specifically concerned with parental rights, and thus applies to political liberals whatever their beliefs about the nature of the parent-child relationship. In the next section, I will show this implication to be deeply problematic for political liberals. The argument of this chapter shows we cannot avoid these implications merely by arguing against a notion of parental control, the argument of the next shows that we must alter deep seated aspects of the political liberal project.

Chapter 5-The Requirements of Civic Education.

The previous chapter showed that within a political liberal framework, parents will have broad authority to control their children's upbringing. The most significant restriction on this authority is that their children must be able to act as reasonable citizens when they grow up. Understanding what constitutes a reasonable citizen, and what kind of upbringing is required to produce one, is thus key to understanding the educational implications of political liberalism.

For Rawls himself, the framework laid out in *Political Liberalism* implies a relatively lax set of requirements. On his position, political liberalism requires far less in education than other varieties of liberalism. If Rawls is correct about the implications of political liberalism it would imply that parents have much more leeway to guide children in the way that they desire. However, many prominent authors argue that the requirements of political liberalism are in fact much more stringent than Rawls believes. Indeed, for a number of influential theorists the practical implications of political liberalism are indistinguishable from those of comprehensive varieties of liberalism which seek to promote autonomy.

Theorists such as Amy Gutmann and Eamonn Callan posit that when the requirements of political liberalism are set against the most plausible assumptions about human nature and society they require a similar set of policies to those required by 'education for autonomy' (although for different reasons). I term this view the convergence thesis. If the convergence thesis is correct, political liberalism will have very different implications for education to those posited by Rawls. All children in a well ordered society will grow up believing that autonomy

is fundamental to living a good life, and each will have the skills necessary to act in an autonomous way. An important consequence of the convergence thesis for my own argument would be that parental choices would be much more constricted than they are on Rawls's account.

Perhaps the leading article supporting the convergence thesis is Amy Gutmann's 'Civic Education and Social Diversity' (1995). In this piece, Gutmann states that 'the two educational practices [those of political and comprehensive liberalism] amount in practice to largely, if not entirely, the same thing' (Gutmann, 1995: 574). Her thesis is echoed by other leading educational scholars such as Eamonn Callan, who believes his argument brings *Political Liberalism* 'out of the closet' and reveals it to be simply another species of comprehensive liberalism (Callan, 1997: 41).

Given the existence of these arguments we cannot simply take at face value Rawls' own account of the implications of his principles. Instead, we must take a closer look at the role education is supposed to play in a political liberal society and at why Rawls believed this role implied a very different kind of education to that advocated by other liberal theorists.

When laying out the goals of education in his own account of political liberalism, Rawls states that:

'the liberalisms of Kant and Mill may lead to requirements designed to foster the values of autonomy and individuality as ideals to govern much if not all of life. But Political Liberalism has a different aim and requires far less. It will ask that children's education include such things as knowledge of their constitutional and civil rights... Moreover, their education should also prepare them to be fully co-operating members of society and enable them to be self supporting, it should also encourage the political virtues so that they want to honor the fair terms of social co-operation in their relations with the rest of society' (Rawls, 1993 : 199).

The goal of education within *Political Liberalism* is thus to ensure that children are prepared to become fully co-operating members of liberal society. Under

conditions of pluralism, becoming a fully co-operating member of society requires being able to live with individuals who hold comprehensive views different from one's own. There is thus a requirement to tolerate other citizens' beliefs. Being a fully co-operating member of society also means having an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Educators thus do have an important role to play in children's moral upbringing. Nevertheless, for Rawls education has a much more limited role than would the case under most influential varieties of comprehensive liberalism, and certainly one which held that the role of education was to promote autonomy.

This chapter will look in detail at each of these three requirements laid out in *Political Liberalism*. In each case, while the proponents of the convergence thesis are right to point to some overlap they greatly overstate their case. The requirements of political liberalism do, unavoidably, have implications for the non-political aspects of life. The kind of education that is needed to produce good liberal citizens will undoubtedly favour some types of comprehensive view over others. However, the existence of this overlap does not imply anything like full convergence. Instead, a well ordered political liberal society would allow a far more diverse range of educational outcomes than those required by a liberalism directly committed to promoting autonomy.

Toleration and mutual respect

Holding tolerant views of other citizens' cultures and beliefs is an essential part of becoming a reasonable citizen. Given the context to which *Political Liberalism* is addressed, namely a modern pluralistic democracy, it is all but inevitable that children will encounter a myriad of other faiths and creeds. In order to participate fully in such a society, citizens must be able to live peacefully with other citizens despite their differing creeds, faiths or perspectives on life. However, as Gutmann points out, simply being able to tolerate other citizens is not enough. A political liberal state cannot endure simply as a pragmatically justified *modus vivendi* but must instead secure stability because its citizens recognise that all of their fellow citizens have an equal place in their society. As I discussed in chapter three, for

Rawls this requirement is that liberal states must be stable for the right reasons (Rawls, 1993: 390).

To establish her case for the convergence thesis, Gutmann begins by arguing that the development of the virtue of tolerance in citizens requires that they have an advanced education. The suggestion is that if children grow up within the confines of a single family or community, they will be unable to appreciate the claims of other very different communities. Legally mandating that children attend school until their late teens is necessary to ensure that they encounter a variety of different views, and ensures attendance at lessons in which they will develop a tolerant attitude towards other citizens. Gutmann's assertion is reinforced by a series of empirical studies that suggest a strong positive correlation between higher levels of education and more tolerant attitudes.

The broad strategy of Gutmann's paper then hinges upon what she calls a 'spill-over' effect (Gutmann, 1995: 572). While promoting autonomy is not the aim of political liberal education, it is the inevitable by-product and hence the convergence thesis is sustained. As an example of this she cites the case of *Wisconsin vs Yoder*, where she believes political liberals ought to side against the parents because education beyond the age of fourteen is necessary to promote toleration. Since this will also inevitably involve advancing a variety of skills and offering the children a series of opportunities it will to some extent also promote their autonomy. Thus, in this case at least, the implications of both political liberalism and liberal perfectionism would be similar.

The empirical work cited by Gutmann is compelling, and when it is combined with the normative requirement for children to respect one another, her conclusion that we should reject the wishes of the parents in the *Yoder* case seems valid. However, it is unclear how much this line argument of argument can justify except in cases, such as *Yoder*, in which the parents wish their children to be removed from school entirely. Indeed, a general problem with Gutmann's account is an over-reliance on a rather narrow set of examples. Specifically, the paper uses the cases of *Mozert* and *Yoder* as 'test cases' and then generalises from these to show

a more general convergence between political liberalism and liberal perfectionism. However, while obviously of enormous importance - and of great value in showing the practical relevance of theoretical reasoning - there are features of both Yoder and Mozert which obscure important aspects of the theoretical issues at stake. Thus concentrating on a few specific cases may cause political and comprehensive liberalism to appear closer than is in fact the case.

The unusual elements of Yoder are obvious. As discussed earlier, the case dealt with the children of the old order Amish community, who lived separately from the mainstream of American life and did not participate in shared civic institutions. The parents wished to remove their children from school after the age of fourteen, since only education up to this level was necessary for the Amish lifestyle, and they felt that further education would endanger their community since exposing their children to 'English' culture might lead them away from the Amish way of life.

The case of Mozert vs. Hawkins dealt with the claim of Vicki Frost, a deeply religious Christian Evangelical, who believed that the curriculum of the Hawkins county school in which three of her children were educated was offensive to her religious beliefs. She argued that imposing the curriculum on her children constituted a violation of her right to practice her religion freely. While this can be read as a classic case of religious parents arguing against liberal views being passed on to their children, the case is in fact atypical in a number of respects. Frost herself held an unusually fundamentalist interpretation of the demands of her Christian faith. Stephen Macedo quotes her as suggesting in court that the word God as found in the bible formed 'the totality of my beliefs' (Macedo, 1995: 471). This, the court found, went beyond the commitments of most of the other members of her Church, indeed even of her pastor. Her hard line creed led Frost to have objections to the curriculum beyond those parts specifically dealing with other cultures or faiths.

Any analysis of these specific parental concerns risks obscuring a number of salient issues. Thus, while Gutmann seems right to say that both a political and a

comprehensive liberal could have strong reason to reject the parents' demands in both cases, that might be largely due to the extreme nature of the particular claims made. In light of this, her conclusions about specific cases may tell us little about how each framework deals with the issue of finding the appropriate place for religion in schooling or other religiously motivated objections to state policy. As Shelley Burttt rightly says, a wide assertion that the major religions are opposed to critical thinking or informed debate is an unhelpful generalisation (Burttt, 1994). She argues that many religious schools encourage debates on ethical issues and interpretation of texts more rigorously than some public schools.

Of course, religious schools may restrict teaching about other faiths, and conduct ethical debate solely through the lens of one doctrine. These are things with which liberals of all stripes might legitimately find fault, but that is simply to say the problem of faith in schooling is finer grained, and demands a more subtle response, than considering solely the objections of the parents in Mozert or Yoder may suggest.

Within the context of this chapter, both Yoder and Mozert represent cases in which the parents' wishes both compromised their children's autonomy to a significant degree, and rely on accepting principles that could seriously undermine the civic aims of political liberalism. They are thus the easiest cases in which to show largely convergent outcomes between the two competing understandings of liberalism. Perfectionist liberals would reject the parents' demands because those demands would compromise the children's development into autonomous adults, whereas political liberals would have good grounds to reject them for other reasons, but the practical result may well be similar in the way Gutmann describes.

A more general test for convergence must thus look at more frequent, and moderate, cases of parental objections to a state curriculum. More often than wishing to withdraw their children entirely parents will object only to one aspect of the curriculum. Classic cases might be parents objecting to their children learning about another religion, about sex, or about Darwin's theory of evolution. Since Gutmann's case is reliant on the spill-over effect, only if these specific

aspects of education are necessary for the promotion of toleration does the political liberal have a compelling reason to overrule the parents.

Here Gutmann's case seems a great deal less compelling. She argues that 'the effective teaching of toleration, for example, typically requires at least a high school education' (Gutmann, 1995: 567). While this assertion is plausible, the convergence thesis does not follow from it since I have argued that the more interesting cases are not those in which parents oppose a high school education outright but where parents oppose only one aspect of the curriculum. All that the empirical data show is that there is a correlative relationship between attending school and developing appropriate attitudes towards other children. It is still an open question whether those aspects of education that are usually the focus of disputes with religious parents are essential for the inculcation of toleration.

There are many aspects of attending school that might plausibly encourage children to develop tolerant attitudes towards others. While at school, children will likely encounter other children who hold differing views from their own. They may well make friends with such individuals, or at least learn that they must be able to co-exist peacefully with them. In so far as these early experiences foster attitudes of toleration, political liberals may well have reason to require educational institutions to draw attendees from across different backgrounds and social strata and require children to attend such schooling (hence the convergence with comprehensive liberals in Yoder). However, these general positive outcomes of a high school education do not entail the convergence thesis, since there might still be reasons why the curriculum required by political liberalism is significantly different from that required by comprehensive liberalism.

As I have suggested, more usual cases than the extreme of Yoder are those in which parents demand that their children are removed only from certain aspects of schooling, for instance science lessons which refer to the theory of evolution, or in which they send their children to schools which place special emphasis on the teaching of one faith over others. Liberals who are concerned directly with the promotion of autonomy have reason to worry about such restrictions on children's

education. Learning only about the tenets of one creed restricts our choice between the various competing doctrines found within society. However, if a 'faith school' can ensure that children are tolerant of others and accept a liberal polity, then political liberals would not have reason to object. Therefore, in so far as a religiously motivated education can meet the demands of teaching toleration while restricting the curriculum presented to students, there are a whole series of real world cases in which the two theories might reach different outcomes.

Indeed, it is in fact crucial to the broader purposes of political liberalism that devout believers of one faith might nevertheless tolerate the presence of others within a liberal regime. As discussed in the review of *Political Liberalism*, stability within a political liberal society depends upon establishing an overlapping consensus between all the reasonable comprehensive conceptions held in society. Thus, this idea depends upon support for liberal principles being found within, or at least being compatible with, the doctrines of each the various creeds and faiths found within society. If a certain religion is within the overlapping consensus, and thus its tenets are themselves supportive of, or at least consistent with, liberal values, it is unclear how exclusive education in only this doctrine would undermine the commitment to liberal principles.

This implies that political liberals cannot always object to children receiving a religiously guided education solely on the grounds that it will be detrimental to the formulation of appropriate attitudes to other citizens' beliefs. If the political liberal model is functioning properly then these religious beliefs themselves ought to be sources of support for liberal principles.

Therefore, when considering the relationship between educating for tolerance and promoting autonomy the case of Yoder is not always a helpful guide. In Yoder, the parents wished to remove their children from school such that they would not meet individuals from other backgrounds. Further, the parents aimed to inculcate them into a value system which is somewhat inimical to liberal politics. Under such circumstances we would expect a convergence between the promotion of autonomy and the civic aims of education.

However, in many other cases parents will wish to remove their children only from some aspects of the curriculum, or will ask that their children be brought up within the teachings of a single faith. In both of these examples, the case for convergence is much weaker. Where parents object only to one aspect of the curriculum, Gutmann's case relies on establishing that it is this particular set of lessons which is necessary for gaining tolerant beliefs, a position which is doubtful in many cases, such as teaching the theory of evolution. Moreover, political liberals cannot coherently argue that faith based schools will necessarily undermine their civic aims. If the doctrine is within the overlapping consensus it ought to promote these aims within itself. Therefore, in both of these cases, liberals concerned with promoting autonomy would still have reason to object, whereas political liberals would not. This suggests that while at the extreme of Yoder the two approaches will reach similar conclusions, for a variety of other cases the balance of reasoning will be different.

At this point, defenders of the convergence thesis might object that while comprehensive and political liberals would reach differing outcomes in some cases, the outcomes of the two theories in education might still be the same. All Gutmann must claim is that those cases in which the theories do reach similar conclusions are sufficient to sustain a more general convergence between political and comprehensive liberalism. However, this argument is undermined by examples of plausible cases which I have already outlined in which the two theories would have reasons to come to different conclusions. I will now show basing the convergence thesis on those cases in which the comprehensive and political liberalism come to the same conclusion requires holding a narrow, and implausible, view of the notion of autonomy.

A general convergence between comprehensive and political liberalism could be sustained by the assumption that individuals are either autonomous or they are not. On this model, all we would need to show is that political liberalism can be said to make children autonomous. From this it would follow that the theories converge because both would create autonomous citizens. However, more plausible than thinking individuals are simply either autonomous or not is

recognising that autonomy is a complex notion that admits of degrees. Thus, we recognise that while Amish children's autonomy might be restricted relative to a child who completes high school, a high school education does not exhaust the possibilities for autonomy promotion. Once this is recognised, we can grant that while some 'spill over' does exist, this does not imply that the convergence thesis is correct. The education demanded by political liberalism may end up promoting autonomy to some degree (given that, for example, political liberals ought to side against the Amish in the case of Yoder). However, there is strong reason to think that a political liberalism, as it is understood by Rawls, will promote autonomy to a far lesser degree than would most plausible varieties of comprehensive liberalism.

In practical terms, a consideration of how we might promote the virtue of tolerance shows that there are a number of actions which parents will be legitimately able to take in a political liberal state which they would be unable to do in a state with perfectionist aims. We have seen, for instance, that perfectionist liberals are likely to support children having the knowledge and ability to choose between many different religious alternatives, whereas political liberals should be comfortable with children receiving education through the lens of only one doctrine. Moreover, while parents may not be able to remove their children from education entirely, they are still able to guide their children's development in a way liberals committed to autonomy could not accept. They could do this by objecting to aspects of the curriculum which were hostile to their comprehensive account, and ensuring their children do not participate in these lessons, or perhaps by educating their children at home.

Knowledge of constitutional essentials and liberal citizenship.

The second role of education for Rawls is in ensuring that children become fully co-operating members of society. Liberal citizens are co-operative members of society in a variety of ways. They participate economically through their jobs and as consumers. Further, for political liberals the just society is a democratic one. Therefore, there is a requirement for laws to be debated amongst citizens themselves. Future citizens must become co-operating members of society if the

liberal values and institutions to which we are committed are to survive and thrive over time.

For the purposes of this chapter the essential question is what is required in order to be a 'fully' co-operating member of society. That is, how far political liberal purposes require children to be educated such that they are able, and willing, to participate in the political and economic life of the state. The extent of the requirements of being a liberal citizen determines whether the convergence thesis is accurate. Relatively lax requirements will allow more diversity in upbringing and education, whereas relatively stringent requirements will tend to push children towards a certain way of life.

A relatively robust notion of the requirements of liberal citizenship is present in Gutmann's article, as well as forming the central plank of other leading political liberal works on education, such as Stephen Macedo's *Diversity and Distrust* (2000). Furthermore for both Gutmann and Macedo, the requirements of becoming fully co-operating members are phrased in ways which seem to include a commitment to personal autonomy. For Macedo, the requirements of liberal citizenship imply that 'Children must at the very least be provided with the intellectual tools necessary to understand the world around them, formulate their own convictions and make their own way in life' (Macedo, 2000: 238). The requirements of democratic citizenship thus seem fertile ground for the convergence thesis. Since children must be able to grow up into individuals capable of participating fully in a democratic polity, there will be stringent limits on any parental conduct which might imperil their ability to do this.

However, before moving too swiftly with this argument, it is worth looking again at Rawls' understanding of the characteristics necessary to function as a citizen. In his terminology the capacities necessary to become a fully participating member of society are the two moral powers, the reasonable and the rational. The rational denotes the ability to form and revise a coherent plan of life, the reasonable the ability to propose and accept fair terms of co-operation with others (Rawls, 1993:

48-54). Qua citizens, individuals in a liberal state are assumed to have a higher order interest in the development of these moral powers.

The goal of educating children so as to promote these capacities is thus consonant with Rawls' own interpretation of the requirements of political liberalism.

However, there is a critical distinction to be made here between mandating that children must be educated so that their moral powers are sufficient to co-operate in society, and arguing that those moral powers ought to be promoted in education as far as is possible.

The assumption that citizens have a higher order interest in the development of their moral powers is common to both *Political Liberalism* and Rawls' earlier work, *A Theory of Justice*. This assumption underwrites the interests of the parties in the original position, and thus is an essential component of Rawls' constructivist methodology. However, in Rawls' later work this higher order interest cannot form part of a wider theory about human flourishing. For it to do so would be in clear violation of his principle of legitimacy.

Instead, the moral powers are assumed to be good for citizens in so far as their own conceptions of the good are rooted in a political context. Apart from perhaps the most ascetic of lives, pursuing any conception of the good will require access to primary goods. This, in turn, necessitates co-operation with others. Thus Rawls states that:

'we view citizens, for the purposes of political justice, as normal and fully co-operating members of society over a complete life, and thus as having the moral powers that enable them to assume this role. In this context we might say: part of the essential nature of citizens (within the political conception) is their having the two moral powers which root their capacity to participate in fair social cooperation' (Rawls, 1993: 202).

The exercise and development of the moral powers cannot then be viewed as intrinsically valuable within the political conception of persons, because to do that would be illegitimate. Instead, their use is viewed as instrumentally valuable given

the value of social co-operation, which is assumed to be essential for the broad range of comprehensive views held in society. Given this instrumental account of the value of co-operation, it does not follow that the goal of promoting the pre-requisites of citizenship can give licence to the strongly liberal programme in education outlined by Macedo or Gutmann. In fact, focussing upon the nature of the moral powers seems to preclude this stance. *Political Liberalism* counts persons as equal citizens, and thus fully co-operating members of society by virtue of their possessing these moral powers to a sufficient degree. From this, we must conclude that development of the moral powers beyond this threshold does not improve the sense in which one is regarded as a 'fully cooperating citizen'.

Rawls is able to claim that citizens have a higher order interest in the development of the moral powers because it is reasonable to assume social co-operation is necessary for all reasonable comprehensive views. Since the moral powers are the pre-requisites of social co-operation, all reasonable citizens have an interest in possessing them despite their differing plans of life. However, it is far from clear that this convergence can be extended to imply that political liberals should always wish to promote the moral powers. For instance, while it may be true that pursuing a devoutly religious life requires some resources and some co-operation with others, it does not seem right to suggest that such a life will require active engagement with the democratic process or high level skills which are valuable in the market place (and this argument can surely be applied to less strict commitments that are nonetheless relatively asocial). Thus while Rawls can plausibly suggest that a limited education is valuable to all, or almost all, conceptions of the good, this will not hold for a more advanced education. It is this advanced education which is needed to sustain the convergence thesis, since *Ceteris Paribus* perfectionist liberals have reason to promote children's education as far as possible.

Thus far then, I have attempted to draw out a distinction between educating children to develop the qualities that allow them to become participating citizens in society and regarding the aim of education as the promotion of those qualities. The former position takes the development of children's faculties as a standard

which must be met; the second takes the promotion of these skills as an end in themselves. In light of political liberalism's purpose in securing stability, and basic political equality between all co-operating members of society regardless of their occupation or capacities, it must be this former position to which political liberals are committed.

In order to tie this distinction to the central question of this chapter, I will now attempt to show that it is one which results in important practical differences in educational provision between political and comprehensive liberalism. Again, the focus upon Mozert and Yoder might serve to obscure these differences. In both cases, one could argue that the parents' wishes would in some way compromise their children's abilities to become fully co-operating members of liberal society. This is most obviously true of in Yoder, in which the parents sought to withdraw their children from the wider society. However, in Mozert too, the sheer volume of information and debate which the parents sought to keep from their children would have served to exclude the children from any number of aspects of liberal democratic society.

Once again though there seem to be a host of other cases in which parents might have wishes for their children that may seem illiberal, and possibly damaging in the view of some comprehensive liberals, but whose overall civic impact would be negligible. Take for instance a hypothetical case in which girls are discouraged from undertaking advanced schooling because their parents believe that a woman's life is more appropriately spent in the home. This might be for religious reasons, but there may be many secular individuals who also believe this. For instance, we could imagine communitarian reasons for removing children from schooling, so that they are more likely to stay in the area in which they grew up or pursue low-skilled careers associated with a certain community or area.

Liberals who wish to promote autonomy have clear grounds on which to oppose parents wishing to prevent their children from engaging in further education. Of course, counter reasons drawn from parental authority or practical feasibility will still apply; no liberal will always favour granting more opportunities in all

circumstances. However, for perfectionist liberals there will be *pro tanto* reasons in favour of opening up further opportunities to all children, no matter their parents' comprehensive views.

The case seems much less clear for a purely civically minded education. Housewives and domestic carers must surely constitute 'full and cooperating' members of society. As, of course, would individuals who did not attend advanced education but instead pursued low-skilled occupations. Referring back to my earlier theoretical distinction, they will therefore meet the threshold set by political liberalism. Thus, whilst counter-factually higher education might engender in these girls a desire to participate more fully in political and economic life, this alone cannot be a sufficient reason to object to the parents' actions. To argue that the stability of liberal institutions is threatened by individuals choosing careers which do not require an advanced education seems untenable.

Therefore, as was the case regarding the issue of toleration, there is indeed some overlap between the civic requirements of political liberalism and the promotion of autonomy. Again though, the link is far weaker than the assertion of convergence implies. Therefore, returning to the proponents of the convergence thesis, Macedo is right to suggest that 'democratically constituted educational institutions may – and should – promote the ideal of a broadly educated and engaged citizenry' (Macedo, 2000: 239). However, I have argued that these institutions may only do this up to the point at which the aim of stability for the right reasons is met. This is co-terminous with the point at which children are capable of becoming fully functioning liberal citizens. Furthermore, I have posited that these criteria are far more minimal than the convergence thesis requires. This can be demonstrated by any case in which parental actions that seem to compromise autonomy have little, if any, significance for the continuation of liberal values and institutions within society. Given a plausible understanding of this criterion of stability, parents will be able to influence their children's development to a far greater extent than they would under more comprehensive accounts of liberalism.

Ensuring children hold a reasonable comprehensive view

The final legitimate end of education for political liberalism I will consider concerns the status of the beliefs and creeds which are present in pluralistic society. Rawls states that reasonable citizens 'accept the consequences of the burdens of judgement' (Rawls, 1993: 54-58). As such, they will recognise that there are a myriad of other reasonable comprehensive views in society, and they will not consider their own view to have special political status. As education's purpose for political liberalism is in creating reasonable citizens, it thus has a role to play in shaping the status children give to their own views and those of others.

Eamonn Callan offers a subtle argument that attempts to show that this goal provides a link between political liberalism's educational agenda and the kind of education which will also promote autonomy. He argues that in order to accept other doctrines as reasonable we must learn about their tenets, and think critically about the advantages of their approach to our own. He writes that:

'the attempt to understand the reasonableness of convictions which may be in deep conflict with doctrines learned in the family cannot be carried through without inviting the disturbing question that these might be the framework of a better way of life, or at least one that is just as good. The question is unavoidable because to understand the reasonableness of beliefs that initially seem wrong or repellent I must imaginatively entertain the perspective those very beliefs furnish, and from that perspective my own way of life will look worse, or at least no better, than what that perspective affirms (Callan, 1997: 36).'

The link to autonomy, then, is through those capacities needed to understand and engage with other cultures and creeds and to see why their views are reasonable. Callan believes that properly engaging with other beliefs requires the ability to dissociate oneself from one's own view. This allows one to assess other systems of thought in an unbiased fashion. Further, one must possess sufficient capacities to understand a variety of different claims, made from within radically different frameworks, and be able to weigh these arguments against one another. Educating children to meet these standards will require questioning 'the moral

authority of the family and the various associations in which the child grows up', and encouraging children to encounter a whole host of other views. Taken together such measures seem to 'look like a pretty familiar description of the central elements in an education for autonomy' (Callan, 1997: 40).

My argument against this account will centre on the understanding of the burdens of judgement which drives Callan's argument. With this in mind, it is worth looking at the context in which Rawls introduces the burdens of judgment and the role they play within his argument. These factors explain why disagreement still occurs between citizens behaving reasonably, and include such things as our different upbringings and the difficulties of weighing evidence. As Rawls defines it, disagreement between reasonable citizens is between those individuals 'who have realized their two moral powers to be free and equal citizens in a constitutional regime' (Rawls, 1993: 55). As I argued in chapter three, accepting the existence of the burdens of judgment is therefore not best understood as an epistemological matter at all, but rather as a matter of accepting the inevitability of disagreement in liberal societies and having an appropriate normative reaction to this fact.

Understanding the requirement to accept the burdens of judgment as largely normative rather than epistemological explains why Rawls sets the criterion of reasonableness in a relatively lax way. Indeed, he explicitly differentiates the standards of reasoning we might use within our private debates and the standards of reasoning appropriate to *Political Liberalism*, he writes that:

'Certainly, comprehensive doctrines will themselves, as they present their case in the background culture, urge far tighter standards of reasonableness and truth. Within that culture we may regard many doctrines as plainly unreasonable, or untrue, that we think it is correct to count as reasonable by the criteria in the text. That criterion we should see as giving rather minimal conditions appropriate for the aims of political liberalism'. (Rawls, 1993: 60f) Indeed, Rawls goes as far to say we should count as reasonable doctrines we 'could not seriously entertain for ourselves' (Rawls, 1993: 59).

For Rawls, then, accepting the burdens of judgment is essentially a normative commitment to put aside certain metaphysical and theological views when engaging in political argument. We must come to see that the disagreements we may have with other citizens over ethics or theology, however important they may be in our personal lives, are not relevant to our views of other citizens' political status. As I argued in chapter three, it follows from this account that distinguishing between reasonable and unreasonable views is largely a matter of deciding whether the view in question is held in good faith by other citizens. Assessing the reasonableness of other citizen's views does not therefore involve a serious consideration of the actual reasons backing up their opinions. This conclusion undermines Callan's arguments, since it is this precisely the requirement that citizens engage in deep reflection about other citizens' views which drives Callan's iteration of the convergence thesis.

To illustrate the differences between my understanding of reasonableness and the burdens of judgment and the way Callan understands these concepts, consider the following passage:

"After all, it would be absurd to teach citizens to adopt the required interpretation of their general ethical or religious convictions when they address fundamental political questions while insisting that they are at liberty to reject it whenever they are thinking or acting in a non-civic capacity. That would be to invite them to oscillate between contradictory beliefs about the rational status of their deepest beliefs, and that is hardly an alluring fate for anyone" (Callan, 1997: 31).

Note that Callan here refers to the rational status of our deepest beliefs. This reflects his belief that accepting the burdens of judgment is primarily an epistemic commitment. For Callan, coming to understand that another view is reasonable means engaging imaginatively with its tenets and practices. As this quote implies, his account of coming to accept the burdens of judgment has significant implications for the ways in which one must conceive of the rational status of one's own doctrine.

By contrast, on my account of the role of the burdens of judgement the rational status of citizens' beliefs was never at the heart of the issue. As I argued above, the burdens of judgement should be seen as primarily a normative commitment, not an epistemic one. Thus the point is that the agent must come to see that even if she is convinced about the true status of her comprehensive beliefs it is still unreasonable to impose these beliefs on others. Therefore, on my model it is not true to say that agents oscillate between a belief set that is applicable for the public domain and ones that are only applicable in private. Indeed, Callan is surely right to suggest that this kind of oscillation between acceptable beliefs is psychologically untenable. Instead, a good political liberal citizen understands that the level of certainty in their private beliefs is not the issue in public debate, and instead the role of public decisions is to strive for reasonable consensus.

The public/private distinction is thus about the kinds of arguments which are applicable in a given context, not about the kinds of reasons which are accurate or which are liable to reach sound conclusions. Therefore, understanding what is appropriate public argument does not require a different view about the rational status of one's view, or about the validity or plausibility of other views. Instead, it requires an understanding of the moral limits of argument in a democratic society.

In light of this distinction, some of Callan's critiques of Rawls' interpretation of political liberal principles can be seen to be misguided. Consider his remarks that 'To retain a lively understanding of the burdens of judgment in political contexts while suppressing it everywhere else would require a spectacular feat of self deception that cannot be squared with personal integrity' (Callan, 1997 : 31). On my account, the burdens of judgment simply are a set of considerations with an explicitly political purpose; it therefore makes little sense to suggest that citizens suppress them in a private context. Citizens are perfectly at liberty to dismiss some of the other views held in society as being mad or misguided, as long as they accept the thought that this should not count against their adherents when deciding matters of basic constitutional essentials.

This interpretation of the role of the burdens of judgment as being primarily normative rather than epistemological is further reinforced when we consider again the broader aims of *Political Liberalism*. As we have seen, political liberals aim at finding a reasonable and just consensus between competing comprehensive views. It seems farfetched to argue that all citizens must come to hold a deeply reflective view of their own beliefs, and their relationship to other doctrines, in order to create such a consensus. Instead, liberalism seeks to find common ground between different philosophies around which to base a principled acceptance of our shared institutions.

Indeed, the far more demanding approach required by Callan would in fact be deeply detrimental to this goal of finding a reasonable consensus. If we believe that political liberalism requires that citizens take the imaginative stance suggested by Callan, we would be forced to admit that our current experience suggests that relatively few citizens ought to be classed as reasonable. Most obviously, many religious believers do not imaginatively entertain the possibility God might not exist. Likewise many, if not most, atheists would fail to meet the criterion because they do not imaginatively entertain the possibility that He does.

This situation would only become more serious if we consider just how many different and varying views exist in a modern pluralistic society. Citizens hold fundamentally different views on questions of ethics, metaphysics, etc. Appreciating the reasonableness of all of these views on Callan's model (or even a representative sample of them) would thus involve a hugely demanding imaginative consideration of a wide variety of diverse questions each from a variety of differing perspectives. Living an acceptable life within a political liberal society would thus become an intensely demanding experience, indeed it seems likely that it would become one which was both inimical to many individuals and one which many might be unprepared to live.

Were this demanding understanding of reasonableness actually necessary to live appropriately with other citizens, political liberals would thus be faced with a difficult decision, whether to abandon their project or accept that it would exclude

a great many citizens. Fortunately, our actual experience of life in liberal societies suggests that citizens who are religious or secular can nevertheless accept that citizens with other views ought to have an equal political status, even though they have never imaginatively engaged with the content of views so alien to their own. It is entirely consistent to believe that another's doctrine is absurd, and perhaps even worthy of pre-emptory dismissal, and still accept that there are principled reasons not to treat one's own beliefs as superior or more important for political purposes. Moreover, many individuals who live relatively unreflective lives nevertheless possess a deep commitment to the kind of liberal values which are required to sustain a just and tolerant society. Therefore, understanding reasonableness as a commitment with primarily normative rather than epistemological implications both widens the scope of political liberalism, in accordance with the aim of the project, and fits better with our understanding of the requirements of being a good liberal citizen.

Given this understanding of reasonableness, we can clearly accept that other individuals hold reasonable beliefs without subjecting our own views to the intense scrutiny Callan believes follows from accepting the consequences of the burdens of judgement. Citizens accept that adherents of other faiths and creeds are political equals, but they do not have to consider the tenets of their own views and others to see why each is, from a certain perspective, as plausible or metaphysically reasonable as the other. Since it is from this intense scrutiny of our own beliefs that Callan derives his argument for a convergence, this thesis must once again be rejected. Instead, political liberalism makes the far less demanding claim that citizens come to accept that all citizens are of equal political status no matter what their comprehensive views. Educating children to see this can still be done while giving parents broad leeway to guide their children's upbringing. Indeed, parents can be free to inculcate a belief system which is deeply inimical to self reflection and autonomy, so long as this doctrine does not make political demands that are unreasonable.

Recap

The purpose of the previous two chapters has been to spell out the implications of political liberalism. This begins from the thought, argued for in section one, that political liberalism stems from a normative relationship between citizens and the state, rather than from a pragmatic search for social stability. Thus, when investigating its educational implications, we do not look for those institutions that will best support social order, but rather those which further these normative goals.

Chapter four argued that the nature of these goals implies that parents will, in almost all cases, be responsible for guiding their children's development. Since the state cannot legitimately hold a view about what sort of people children ought to become, it cannot design its educational institutions to foster any one conception of the good life. Since children's development requires a close connection with one authority, some other actor must thus step in to fill this role. Given the importance of securing a liberal state which can secure the principled endorsement of its citizens, there are strong reasons to allow parents to have this authority.

Since the political liberal state cannot take a position on which non-political values children ought to acquire, the only limits on parental authority will be that children grow up to be able to act as reasonable citizens. Chapter five investigated these requirements, in light of the arguments of Gutmann and Macedo, that the kind of education necessary to fulfil these requirements is indistinguishable from that which would be required by most versions of comprehensive liberalism. I rejected this argument, and showed that in fact in a wide variety of cases political liberalism will diverge sharply from comprehensive liberalism. Just as Rawls himself believed, the requirements of political liberalism are relatively lax, and are compatible with a much wider variety of educational institutions than merely those which would be required by proponents of 'education for autonomy'.

Thus far then, the thesis has both outlined why political liberalism represents the best solution to pluralistic society, and shown the implications of political liberalism as it is commonly understood in the case of education. Briefly, this story

runs as follows. We begin with the recognition that liberal societies will always disagree about matters of the good. Since the state represents the shared power of all citizens, it cannot legitimately promote one of these comprehensive views at the expense of the others. This principle of legitimacy implied that the state could not take a position on what sort of person children ought to become. Thus, parents are able to choose any life at all for their children, so long as they are able to act as reasonable citizens, a requirement that, I argued, is far less stringent than it is often taken to be.

Taken together, this story seems to imply that the existence of pluralism means that the state ought to cede almost total authority in education over to parents. However, as I said at the beginning of this section, the purpose of elucidating the implications of political liberalism in education was not to defend these practical policies but to show their reasoning as a first step to changing them. These policies must be altered because as they stand they are subject to a serious objection. To anticipate the argument of the next section, a problem with the framework of political liberalism is that it ignores important interests of children themselves. This implies that political liberalism as currently conceived and in relation to education cannot be justified to this group of society, and will thus fail its own test of legitimacy.

Section 3

Justice to Children

Chapter 6-Liberal legitimacy and children

As we have seen, the political liberal principle of legitimacy states that institutions must be justifiable, in principle, to all reasonable citizens. Accepting this view thus invites consideration of which individuals count as citizens for the purposes of political liberalism. Rawls himself, as well as many other political liberal theorists, largely dispense with this question by considering only fully able, adult, individuals who are born within the state and never leave except by death. While these idealised circumstances may be useful in abstract theorising, there is a risk that they obscure a much messier political reality. In the idealised world Rawls considers, we can reasonably assume that all individuals can be considered to be free and equal citizens. By contrast, in political practice there are several hard cases in which the political status of various individuals is far from clear. Familiar examples here are individuals who have entered a country seeking political asylum, or who have entered a country illegally. There is also the extremely difficult case of individuals who have severe mental disabilities, which might call into question their ability to act as citizens of the state.

For our purposes, the most significant hard case is that of the children in society. Following the victories of the civil rights and feminist movements in the 20th century, children are now the only numerically significant group in society that is denied political and civil rights as a matter of course. Note that this observation is

not made to imply that these cases are strictly analogous. While the treatment of ethnic minorities and women in previous centuries was based on flawed or pernicious reasoning, children are a genuinely special case in a number of respects.

Children live fundamentally different lives compared to older individuals; lives characterised by a reliance on adults and constant and profound changes in their physiology and psychology. These differences have political significance since they imply that there are good reasons to doubt the wisdom of allowing children to live independent lives or to participate in complex public decision making. Thus, the circumstances of childhood seem to imply that the basic rights which we liberals believe should be held by all adults appear deeply inappropriate if held by children.

This judgment is reflected in political practice. In all current liberal societies children cannot vote in public elections or exercise a series of important legal rights. This differential treatment of adults and children raises important theoretical issues since the foundational commitment of liberalism is that all individuals should be political equals, despite the many differences between them. Indeed, were any other group in society treated in the same way as children it would seem reminiscent of the worst failings of our societies in previous centuries.

Liberal theory must therefore have a way of showing which features of children justify their being treated in these ways. As I alluded to above, this account will surely refer to children's diminished faculties and physical vulnerability. Nevertheless children, at least older children, are distinct and functioning individuals who are in many ways as capable as most adults. In light of this, no defensible theory of justice can ignore them entirely. Furthermore, we can usually assume that children will become future citizens, and thus political decisions made now will have an impact upon them when they are adult citizens. Children are therefore often taken to occupy an ambiguous position with regards to the liberal state, lying somewhere between the full and equal political status of adults and not having any political status at all.

The Threshold view

Both in contemporary political theory and in practice the usual way of assessing the political status of young individuals is by means of a threshold. This means that under a certain age, usually eighteen, individuals are classed as minors in the eyes of the law. Minors lack many of the important rights and privileges which are held by other citizens, such as the right to vote in elections and to enter into legally binding contractual obligations with others. Minors also have a different status with regards to the institutions of the criminal law, in that they are treated as holding diminished responsibility for their actions which may imply different sentencing for offences than would be the case for adults who committed the same crimes.

This differentiation between the class of minors and that of adult citizens is justified by reference to the differences between children and adults. Children are taken to have less developed mental and physical capacities, as well as being less emotionally mature. These differences between adults and children are seen as being significant enough to imply that children must hold different legal rights. However, notice that above this threshold differences between the emotional, mental or physical maturity of individuals cease to matter. Thus, the fact that some adults are more cognitively developed or emotionally mature than others has no impact at all on their political status. Above the age of majority all (sane, able-bodied) adults are counted the same.¹⁴

As well as guiding political practice, this threshold view is also found in *Political Liberalism*. For Rawls, the relevant capacities that ground our claim to equal liberal citizenship are the two moral powers, the reasonable and the rational. The rational denotes the ability to form and revise a conception of the good, the reasonable refers to the ability to propose and abide by fair terms of co-operation.

¹⁴ This is with the partial exception of the legality of some substances, such as alcohol in the United States which can only legally be purchased by those above 21. While significant, these legal differences do not seem sufficient to trouble the broader point about the legal relationship between adults and children.

Together these two moral powers 'root the ability to participate in society' (Rawls, 1993: 34). For Rawls, individuals are counted as full members of society, and thus as free and equal citizens, by 'virtue of their possessing the two moral powers to the requisite degree' (Rawls, 1993: 34).

Notice that while Rawls makes a link between an individual being counted as a citizen and an assessment of their motivations and abilities, he does it by way of a threshold in the way I described. So long as individuals possess the moral powers to the 'requisite' degree they are counted as equal members of society. Below the requisite threshold individuals are not counted as full citizens. Above it, all individuals are counted as free and equal citizens in exactly the same way, thus differences in abilities or motivations cease to matter.

The implication of the threshold view is that children are not full citizens of the state in the same way as adults, an implication that has important consequences for the way they fit into a political liberal society. This chapter will now explore the rationale behind the threshold view, and argue that the attraction of this view is that it is seemingly able to reconcile two contradictory impulses in our intuitions about the proper political status of children. The first such impulse is that any differentiation between the status of children and adults must be rooted in differences in capacities. The second is that a general link between an individual's capacities and their political status is anathema to liberal theory and to political liberalism in particular. The threshold view is seemingly able to satisfy both of these considerations, and is indeed the only way we could legitimately exclude children from citizenship without also unfairly excluding some adults.

Children must be divided from adults via consideration of their capacities

The first point to note in explaining the initial attraction of the threshold view is that any plausible understanding of the status of children must allow for some way of differentiating the rights of children from adults. Given the sharp differences which I have alluded to between the cognitive capabilities, physical stature and emotional maturity of adults and children, many of the liberal rights which are granted to adults would seem deeply inappropriate if held by children. These

cognitive, emotional and physical differences I will collectively refer to as 'differences in capacities' between children and adults. These differences in capacities are large enough to imply that any defensible theory must show that children ought to be treated as a different class of individuals, with a different set of rights, from adults.

Indeed, given the extremely vulnerable position of very young children, drawing some line between adults and children seems unavoidable. We must surely concede that babies and toddlers must be treated as a different class of individuals in light of their diminished faculties. Thus, even the work of 'child liberationist' theorists is largely directed to the age at which the divide between children and adults is appropriate rather than at the eradication of the distinction between adults and children altogether.¹⁵ While I am not ultimately persuaded by the work of child liberationists, it is important to notice that this chapter is silent over the question of where the divide between adults and children ought to be drawn. Rather, my argument assumes that there must be a line drawn somewhere and then explores the consequences of this distinction for the notion of political equality in particular, and for political liberalism more generally.

The second point to note in explaining the attraction of the threshold view is that these differences in capacities are the *only* relevant feature which divides children from adults. It is only by considering their different physical, emotional and cognitive development that we can meaningfully distinguish what it is to be a child rather than an adult. The only other alternative is to differentiate children from adults simply on the basis of age, which would be an arbitrary and unfair basis for exclusion. As Steven Lecce puts it, 'to discriminate against the young *because they are young* is as bad, morally speaking, as discriminating against, say, blacks or women because of the colour of their skin, or their sex, respectively. That kind of ageism, as it is now called, is indeed reprehensible' (Lecce, 2009: 6).

¹⁵ Consider here Philippe Aries' claim that the notion of 'childhood' is socially constructed, which is often taken as an extreme argument against our current understanding of the appropriate role of children (Aries, 1962). Even he argues that it was only after the age of 5 or 7 that children could join the world of persons.

Thus, this initial discussion of the status of children has revealed a valuable insight into the notion of liberal equality more generally. This concept must include some link to a non-arbitrary distinction. Only in so doing can our notion of liberal equality avoid both the deeply counter-intuitive result of treating extremely young children as the same as adults and the problem of treating children differently simply because of the arbitrary fact that they are of a different age.

Linking capacities to status is inappropriate in the case of adults

Unfortunately, attempting to account for differences in treatment between adults and children via a reference to their differing capacities is a highly dangerous move for liberal theorists. Just as there are differences in capacities between adults and children, so there are significant differences between many adults. Asserting a link between individuals' political status and their capacities thus risks undercutting the basic fairness enshrined in liberal principles. Indeed, it is particularly problematic for political liberals. As we saw when differentiating political from comprehensive liberalism, political liberals do not base their theory in a wider account of the good life or the metaphysical status of humans. Instead, the appeal of political liberalism is that it represents the fairest and thus most reasonable account of justice for a pluralistic society.

According to political liberals, liberal rights are equally distributed between all adult citizens (as is the case in Rawls' own first principle of justice) because only an equal distribution can be justified as fair to all citizens. This contrasts with an account in which rights and status are equally distributed because of an actual similarity between either the abilities or inclinations of all citizens.

Indeed, an account of liberalism premised on fairness would be undercut by a direct link between citizens' capacities and their political status. To illustrate, consider John Stuart Mill's suggestion that 'the wise' ought to receive as many as seven times as many votes as less educated individuals. Underpinning this suggestion is the thought that there are some individuals within society who are better qualified to make decisions about the issues facing the polity than others. As David Estlund and other leading democratic theorists concede, this claim is

difficult to dispute (Estlund, 2008: 210). All Mill's account rests on is that some individuals are better prepared to grapple with aspects of public policy than others.

However, despite the seemingly undeniable fact that some individuals are better able to understand and respond to questions of public policy, the suggestion of plural votes is one that all liberal democratic societies have rejected, and one which would gain little currency with most contemporary democratic theorists. Of course, current liberal societies operate on the basis of representative democracy rather than more direct versions. Nevertheless, the rights to participate and influence public affairs are evenly distributed despite the fact that some individuals may be more qualified to participate than others. Our current practices, backed by deeply held intuitions, suggest that a fair distribution of certain basic rights is an equal one, despite the differences in capacities and abilities of citizens. This is in response to the close connection these basic rights have to an individual's political status.

This notion of fairness is not the only reason we might reject Mill's suggestion. To begin with, we might note that there are several important practical considerations which would lead us to question the wisdom of Mill's suggestion. We might, for instance, be sceptical of the suggestion that individuals who have been educated at a university are necessarily wiser or better qualified to make decisions than those who chose not to attend or who did not meet the entry requirements. It also seems plausible that concentrating votes in the hands of an educated minority would lead to a government which failed to represent society properly, and perhaps would thus be insensitive to important concerns arising from members of different social groups. Estlund refers to this as the 'demographic objection' (Estlund, 2008: 215).

However, while practical considerations like this are undoubtedly highly significant, they do not capture the real force of our rejection of Mill's arguments. After all, neither of these considerations seems entirely unavoidable. It is implausible to argue that we can never point to individuals who will be better able

to weigh the various considerations relevant to public policy, even if we are sceptical such skills are dependent simply on higher education. There are surely institutional devices which could measure how informed and engaged an individual was with political issues, and we would tend to think that these factors correlate generally with better decision making. Likewise, we could also imagine a sophisticated institutional remedy to the problem of representation caused by Mill's suggestion. For instance, the legislature could be weighted to map onto the demographic and social characteristics of the population at large.

However, even with these modifications, our contemporary understanding of democratic principles would, I think, reject distributions of rights and liberties that are systematically unequal. The real force of this rejection then is not that unequally distributing political rights is unwise or misguided, though it may be, but rather that it is unfair. We think that unequally distributing these basic rights undermines this notion of fairness, even when there are seemingly sound reasons for doing so.

Therefore, our intuitive understanding of fairness cuts against linking the basis of liberal equality to a notion of capacities. This poses a significant problem for political liberal theorists when addressing the status of children, since it is precisely these differences in capacities which must be appealed to when differentiating adult individuals from children. We must claim that children have different rights, and indeed lack some rights entirely, because their diminished faculties imply that they cannot utilise these rights effectively. However, to assert that some adults ought to hold different rights because of their greater abilities is seen as unfair and inconsistent with fundamental commitments of liberal egalitarianism. A link between an individual's capacities and their political status is thus necessary in the first case but objectionable, perhaps even offensive, in the other.

The attraction of the threshold view is that it is seemingly able to reconcile these two conflicting intuitions about the proper relationship between an individual's capacities and their place in society. Recall that this view states that below a

certain threshold it is legitimate to treat individuals differently but that above the threshold everyone must be counted as equals. Since the threshold will be cashed out in terms of capacities, children are excluded from the political community for the right reasons. In this way their differing status is acceptable in a way that refusing to grant rights to women or minorities would not be. Further, all individuals are equal above the requisite threshold. Thus the link between capacities and political status is not allowed to infect the basic equality between all adult citizens, despite their differing abilities.

Not only is the threshold view seemingly able to accommodate both the need to treat children differently and the desire to treat adults the same, it is in fact the *only* way we could exclude children without being unfair to either adults or children. It is unfair to exclude children from the rights and privileges of citizenship for any other reason than their diminished capacities. To do so would be prejudiced against children simply because they are children. However, any link between capacities and status risks undermining liberal equality amongst adults. Therefore, only a threshold view, which states differences in capacities only matter up to a certain point, can possibly exclude children from full citizenship without undercutting our commitment to equal citizenship between all adults.

Problems for the threshold view

On the face of it, the threshold view is thus able to account for the two seemingly contradictory impulses in our thinking about liberal equality. However, I will now argue that a closer look at the actual course of human development presents fatal problems for the threshold view. The first fact which presents a problem is that human beings gain mental, physical and emotional capacities in a gradual fashion, meaning that there are no discrete changes which would provide a natural point to act as the threshold. While it might sometimes be helpful to refer to children as coming to the age of reason, or to say that a child is not autonomous but will be someday, using such language risks obscuring this important fact. Given this gradual process of development, it makes little sense to suggest that after some certain point children are capable of acting as citizens in a way they were not

before. Instead, people will slowly gain in skills and experience and concurrently it becomes increasingly more justified to treat them as independent members of the community.

This poses a political problem in so far as it will tend to make any single age limit for acquiring the status of an equal citizen seem arbitrary. While it seems clear that a three year old cannot possibly be qualified to take up a role as a citizen in debates over public policy, whereas a thirty year old obviously is, there are no discernible difference between the skills someone possesses on their eighteenth birthday compared to the day before. This is not a trivial point; someone who is only one day off being eighteen on the day of an election will not be able to vote. This basic fact of biology seems to suggest that there will be no compelling reason, at least one premised on an assessment of the individual's capacities, why this will be true.

The standard response to this problem is to point out that there simply must be some line at which people come to possess the privileges of adulthood. Thus, despite the arbitrary nature of mandating that individuals acquire rights on their eighteenth or sixteenth birthday, there is simply no alternative. However, while in practice this may be the only possible solution, it does not fully dissolve the problem for liberal theory. At the very least it introduces an uncomfortable degree of arbitrariness into what purported to be a well-defined understanding of free and equal citizenship.

More serious problems for the threshold account are caused by the fact that children develop at different rates. Biologically, people go through puberty and other changes at different times in their lives. Children mature at different rates, for a whole range of genetic and environmental reasons, and will thus have very different sets of skills by the time they reach their teenage years. Anyone who has attended school will know that the personalities and abilities of children at any age vary tremendously, and further that age alone is a poor predictor of children's levels of maturity or cognitive development. This observation is shown most markedly by so called 'child prodigies' who are capable of amazing feats well

beyond the capabilities of many adults, but applies more generally to many children who are capable of complex reasoning or mature decision making.

A capacity based criterion for determining the distinction between childhood and adulthood thus cannot deliver any fixed point, say age eighteen that will link to a level of development achieved by all children. For any age group, some children will be as mature and capable as older children, whereas some will be less. Therefore any age limit, even if it is appropriate for the development of an average child, might seem unfair to those whose progression is faster than average.

This problem is well captured by Joe Coleman in his article 'Answering Susan: Liberalism, Civil Education and the Status of Younger Persons' (2002). The Susan in question is a gifted young child attending a political theory conference on education. She listens to the various arguments about the content of mandatory education that children ought to receive, and responds with a simple question 'how do you know I am a child?' (Coleman, 2002: 161). That is, what qualities does Susan necessarily possess by virtue of her age that imply that she ought to be forced to go to school, and not be able to vote, whereas adults cannot be treated in this way.

The two features of human development I have outlined above suggest no such account will be forthcoming. Assuming Susan is only slightly younger than the legal age of adulthood, we saw that there is no biological reason why she would be different from marginally older individuals who are classed as adults. Given that individuals develop at different rates, there may well be no capacities at all in which Susan is deficient compared to an average adult citizen. Cases such as Susan thus expose the fundamental unfairness of the threshold view. Recall that unless we treated children differently because of their different capacities, our policy towards them would be ethically similar to objectionable treatment of ethnic minorities or women. In Susan's case though, there are no differences in capacities between her and some individuals classed as adults. We are then treating her differently simply because she is young.

Further, this problem is compounded once we consider the mirror case to Susan's. This is the case of someone who only recently passed the age of adulthood but who has developed relatively slowly compared to his peers, and would thus have similar capacities to the average for a 'child' age group. An age based threshold would count such an individual as an adult, despite the fact that the same reasons which justified excluding children would seem to apply to him as well. In both cases then, the link between the treatment of an individual and that individual's abilities has broken down. Since it was this link which rooted the appeal of the threshold view this represents a serious problem.

The only plausible way that a direct link between an individual's capacities and their status can be maintained is to have individuals acquire the political status of adults at different points in their lives. So, exceptionally capable children might be thought of as full citizens at the age of thirteen or fourteen, whereas other individuals might not be until much later in their lives. This view would still be a threshold view, but the threshold would be disentangled from any set age limit. As such, the legal and ethical 'age of adulthood' would be different for different individuals. In this way, we might be able to reflect better the differences in capacities between people in society.

However, this suggestion is open to serious objections. Some of these are practical in nature. For instance, all of the possible capacities to which we might attach rights - say, intelligence or some conception of maturity - are likely to be extremely controversial. Moreover, any potential candidates for differentiating persons would be extremely difficult to measure effectively. Many theorists have long pointed to the difficulties of the IQ measure of 'intelligence', even in its stated aim of measuring academic ability. Connecting any such numerical value to the notion of citizenship would be likely to be even more problematic.

However, just as with the case of plural votes, these practical objections do not capture the chief reason have to be sceptical about this proposal. Beyond these practical concerns there a more serious objection rooted in the norm of fairness. Specifically, the notion that individuals of the same age ought to be treated

differently by the state seems intuitively at odds with the principle of liberal equality.

Psychologically, it seems plausible to suggest that individuals will judge themselves most often relative to individuals of the same age. So, if at age twenty five I do not have the right to vote but all of my similarly aged friends do then this will likely strike me as unfair. This situation will likely seem deeply demeaning if the reason given for my differing status is that I have been judged by the state to be lacking in various capacities relative to my peers. Indeed, it would seem to undermine the sense in which I could regard myself as a free and equal member of society.

In fact, given the process of human development, the discrepancies between the appropriate 'age of adulthood' for different individuals would be relatively large. As an example, consider again the criteria of the two moral powers. As I stated, individuals must be both able to form and pursue their own rational plan of life, and be able to recognise the claims of others and their place in common institutions in order to co-operate fairly with them. Assessing the rational would thus refer to things such as intelligence, maturity and the ability to plan for the long term.

It seems plausible to suggest that, in most cases, the older an individual gets the better they will be at forming a coherent plan of life. Individuals generally develop mental faculties, as well as gain experience of life which allows them to better assess their own needs and goals, as they grow older. Robert Noggle has argued persuasively that children do not have a developed comprehensive view, and instead alter their plans on fairly regular basis. He writes that 'infants and very young children do not have what we could call commitments, values or projects at all. The infant's motivational system is better described as a set of biological drives, together with whatever pre-social impulses are acquired soon after birth... Later the child begins to develop preferences that are less grossly biological. However, most of the young child's not purely biological preferences are simple and fleeting...This lack of stability in the child's preference structure makes her agency far less temporally extended than that of an adult. Abrupt and radical

changes are part and parcel of childhood, whereas they are unusual events for an adult' (Noggle, 2002: 103).

However, while these assertions may be generally accurate, they cannot possibly establish a necessary connection between a person's age and her ability to make a coherent plan of life. There are, after all, numerous examples of people following through their childhood dreams much later in life, or marrying their childhood sweethearts. Further, many individuals hold the same basic belief system across their whole lives, remaining committed to the church or institution they followed in childhood. In contrast, many of us know adult individuals who seem incapable of making long term plans or who radically change their beliefs and goals on a regular basis.

Assessing whether individuals are able to participate on reasonable terms with others is largely a question of character, which will again refer back to an individual's emotional development. Since citizens must also be able to play their part in common democratic institutions, we might also consider their levels of political understanding and civic engagement. Again, variation across each of these criteria is likely to be relatively large. This is particularly the case with the latter two which are heavily dependent upon the education an individual has received, and which engage with issues some citizens will find fascinating but others will find uninteresting.

Once again though there seems no decisive reason to think that children will necessarily be less qualified to act as political citizens than adults. Many children display an intuitive understanding of appropriate conduct and fair play at a very young age. By contrast many adults, not merely those truly unreasonable individuals who engage in disreputable or criminal behaviour, are at times selfish or unwilling to consider the fair claims of others. As with the political requirements of citizenship, we see that some young children are articulate and able to debate at a high level with others, whereas many studies point to a worrying lack of civic knowledge amongst a large number of citizens of current liberal democratic societies. Therefore, across either of the relevant dimensions distinguishing a neat

class of children that can clearly be distinguished from the class of adults is likely to be impossible.

These factors imply that a large number of adult individuals may fall into the same political class as children if we use a capacity based criterion for membership. Thus, some individuals who are highly motivated and mature will be thought of as citizens from a young age. By contrast, other individuals will not be thought of as citizens by the state until far later in their lives. Indeed, if we begin with the thought that it is inappropriate for most children to have the full rights of citizenship, then a capacity based criterion would imply that many adults would never receive these rights at all. For this to be true, it would only have to be plausible that some adults never reach the level of cognitive development and civic engagement reached by an average eighteen year old. This political implication, a class of individuals who would be permanently denied the rights and status of equal citizens, seems reminiscent of the worst features of liberal societies before the latter half of the 20th century, and is surely unacceptable to any contemporary understanding of the principle of liberal legitimacy.

These troubling implications can be largely (although never entirely) avoided if we revised the criteria for citizenship to a lower set of required capacities. However, the obvious cost associated with this move is that we would no longer be able to show satisfactorily why children ought to be treated differently. If we set a standard designed to include all, or almost all, adults it would have to be relatively lax, which would imply a large number of children would also count as full citizens. A threshold that includes all of the adults we intuitively want to be included is thus redundant, since it fails to show why children should be treated differently from adults.

The threshold view is thus presented with fatal problems once we consider the actual processes of human development. If there really were a well defined 'age of reason' that all individuals reached at a similar point in their lives it might make sense to argue that individuals below this line should not be counted as members of the political community in the same way as full citizens. However, once we take

account of the facts that no such clear cut line exists, and individuals' development occurs at different rates, this position collapses.

Underlying these problems is a tension that has been running through the chapter. The only plausible candidate for differentiating adults and children is some notion of capacities, but foundational notions of liberal equality suggest that this concept must be blind to the differences in capacities between individuals. This understanding of liberal fairness is demonstrated when thinking both about plural voting and the point at which we define adulthood. This tension is fatal to the threshold view. Any threshold will be either vacuous, and in attempting to accept that all adults are equal citizens fail to show why children ought to be treated differently, or become exclusionary and risk creating an underclass of disenfranchised children and adults.

Whole lives view

To meet the challenge posed by children's status, what is needed then is a way of preserving the commitment to basic fairness enshrined in the view that all citizens deserve equal status irrespective of differences in capacities, while accepting the fact that children's different capacities mean that they must be treated differently by the state. My solution to this problem is to break the close connection between equal status and identical rights. Thus, I believe it is possible to accept that children have an equal political status to adults, but deny that this implies that they must have an identical set of political rights.

This solution in turn depends upon a different understanding of equality. My account is inspired by the work of Norman Daniels in his seminal text *Am I My Parents' Keeper: An Essay on Justice Between Young and Old* (1988). The key insight of this account is that discrimination on the grounds of age is fundamentally different from discrimination on the basis of gender or race. He writes that 'if we treat people differently by race or sex, then we risk violating

principles governing equality among persons. Treating the young and old differently, however, may not mean treating people unequally. Over a lifetime, such differential treatment may still result in our treating people equally' (Daniels, 1988: 63). Since everybody ages, policies which appear to be unfair to older or younger groups might in fact be justifiable when looked at over the whole lives of the individuals concerned.

Daniels' work is directed towards the problem of distributing healthcare. Here he argues that when assessing the fairness of any given institution, we should not compare all individuals living now and see if they receive equal treatment. Rather, we ought to look at the outcomes provided to each cohort and see if they are broadly equivalent. So, it is inevitable that pensioners and young children will receive an entirely different bundle of health care resources from the state, but this is not an incidence of injustice. The test of fairness is to look at each 10 year old, 30 year old, 70 year old, etc., and see if each is receiving equal treatment with others of the same age, then to compare the resources devoted to people who are being born now to those born 50 years ago and see if they are justifiably similar (Daniels, 1988: 66-83).

While the problems of healthcare are very different from the ones with which I am concerned, I propose that the best understanding of children and liberal citizenship follows a broadly similar model. We saw above that only an equal distribution of rights is a fair response to the claims of free and equal citizens. However, on my account, the equality referred to here is conceived of as being measured across a person's whole life, rather than comparing all citizens at any one moment. What matters is the totality of the benefits and burdens that an individual receives over the course of their lives. Thus on this view, we can treat individuals differently so long as each receives the same treatment over the course of their lives. Each individual born in the liberal state will thus live for some time with one set of rights (those deemed appropriate for children) and after the age of adulthood every individual will hold those rights which are constitutive of liberal citizenship.

In contrast to the difficulties faced by the threshold view, the whole lives view has a natural way of responding to the tension between our intuitions about the relationship between children and adults, in which differences in capacities matter, and relations between adults, in which they do not. Key to the whole life account's success is that it breaks the link between political status (and thus inclusion within the justificatory community) and the bundle of rights a citizen has at any one time. This move is necessary since it allows us to posit that political status is insensitive to an individual's capacities while still claiming that the actual rights and privileges allotted to each group can differ because of their differing situation. We can accommodate the fact that citizenship should not be dependent on abilities and maintain that all citizens are of equal status despite their different abilities. Simultaneously, we can hold that because many children are unable to participate in democratic procedure or live independent lives there are good reasons to give children a very different bundle of rights from that given to adults.

This model can also deal with the case of children who seem just as capable as adults. Recall that I argued that, in many instances, individuals will compare themselves to others of the same age, and will regard differences in treatment as unfair even if it is actually true that the others possess greater capacities. To illustrate, consider again the case of Coleman's Susan. While it could well be true that developmentally she is more capable than another child of the same age, there would still be a perceived unfairness if she were regarded as a full citizen at an age at which other children are not so regarded. The whole-lives view can account for this intuition by opting for equality between individuals across the totality of their lives.

Therefore, while the implications of the whole lives view are similar to those of the threshold view, the whole lives account has a much more persuasive answer to Susan when she argues that she should be treated in the same way as adults. Proponents of the threshold view must respond to Susan by arguing that some difference in capacities between her and an adult justifies her different status. In effect, they must argue that in some respect she is less able than adults. However, we saw that this reply is unconvincing since such differences in capacities may well

not exist. By contrast, on the whole lives view, we say to Susan that while she is treated as a child now, she will receive the rights and privileges held by an adult at same time as everyone else in her society. Thus, she has not been unfairly penalized, and in fact only in this way can our liberal society maintain the basic equality to which Susan herself is appealing.

Possible objections

Interestingly, Coleman himself considers a response to Susan that is similar to the one I am proposing. He calls this ‘the response from equal treatment’. He says that ‘Liberals might try a second response, by arguing that Susan’s parents were required to undergo civic education...Susan is not being treated differently from her parents’. He argues though that this response is inadequate. To show this he imagines:

“a society very much like our own except for one fact: the older generation in this society never experienced any formal program of civic education. Now suppose this older generation decides to impose some form of civic education on the younger generation. Would liberals feel the need to say that for this to be fair the whole society must be subject to these programs? I do not think so. Liberals would instead say older persons do not need this civic education in the same way younger persons do” (Coleman, 2002: 162).

Coleman is right to suggest that liberals should reject enforcing education on all adult citizens. There seems something importantly different about making children go to school compared to adults. However, he is wrong to think that forcing adults to go to school is an implication of a principle of equal treatment, once this commitment is properly understood. I have suggested that the best understanding of this principle demands equality within a generation, and that the policies of the state are justifiable to all generations. It is misguided though to think that this burden of justification will imply identical treatment to individuals who are members of different generations. Equality of this kind would ignore the

fact that the circumstances faced by society are liable to change dramatically over time. Thus, certain policies might be affordable for one generation but not for the next, or some institutions might be designed as solutions to temporary problems.

Instead, the principle of equality only demands that the reasons given in justification of institutions cannot favour one generation over another. We might imagine some sort of original position here to model this requirement, but the details are not essential to my argument. All that we must show to rebut Coleman is that the changing situations faced by society imply that different treatment to different generations need not violate the principle of equality. In the case Coleman mentions, we therefore have to ask for the reasons for the change in policy that he describes. If, for instance, we had made advances in educational policy which showed new ways of promoting civic virtue, it seems entirely sensible to enforce children to undergo a regime which was not forced upon their parents.

Based on his article, Coleman's response to this line of argument would be to point out that many adults have a similar lack of civic knowledge as children. He lists a series of deeply worrying statistics about the lack of essential public knowledge amongst citizens of the United States (Coleman, 2002: 162). Therefore, if circumstances have changed such that children ought to be forced to undergo civic education, surely these under-informed adults ought to do so as well.

Here though, the whole-lives view has a compelling response. Recall that the two components of this account were that institutions must be justifiable to citizens of all ages, and that citizens living in the same generation ought to receive similar treatment. This second condition derives from the assumption that individuals will compare themselves to others of the same age in a way that they will not for members of different generations. Differential treatment within cohorts offends the liberal equality in a way that differential treatment between cohorts does not, and the state must therefore treat all members of any one cohort the same so that they see that they are treated as civic equals. The whole lives view thus has a reason for treating all adults of the same age in a similar way, even if some lack important skills which others do not.

So, we can agree that Coleman is right to think that current level of civic engagement and understanding amongst citizens of the United States (as, no doubt, elsewhere) is deeply troublesome. We would hope that a stronger commitment to civic education might ameliorate this problem for the next generation. However, it does not follow from the principle of equal treatment that under-informed adults ought to receive the same treatment as children. To do so would imply that only a selected set of adults would be forced to return to school while other, better informed, adults would not. This would again create a deep sense of unfairness on the part of these adults who are now treated like children, and would thus undermine the degree to which they felt themselves to be equal members of society. The whole lives view would thus reject sending only some adults back to school since differences between those individuals within a single age cohort violates the principle of liberal equality in a way that differences between different cohorts does not.

Conclusions

While the arguments in this chapter have focused on the status of children, they have touched upon important issues in caching out the implications of liberal equality and political liberalism. A foundational goal of the political liberal project is to construct laws which treat citizens as civic equals. The most important consequence of this is that the distribution of rights and liberties ought to be relatively insensitive to the capabilities and inclinations of citizens within society. This condition would be met by Rawls' first principle, and by all reasonable political conceptions. This equality between citizens cannot be based on a thick notion of equality that held between citizens, since this would seem dependent upon a (at least partially) comprehensive account of non-political values.

However, this understanding of the value of liberalism opened up a serious problem in our treatment of children. It did so because it seemed to rule out the

only plausible ground for differentiating the rights of children from those of adults: viz., the relative capacities of the different groups. In so far as we wish to make our institutions insensitive to these differences between adults, we seem to lose the basis on which to make them sensitive to the differences between children and adults. However, this is a troublesome conclusion, since any plausible account must accept that some line must be drawn between these two groups.

In answer to this problem, I showed there are powerful reasons to endorse a whole –lives view of liberal equality. This view states that basic equality between citizens means all must have the same package of rights over the course of their lives. This view allows that two differently aged citizens, although both of the same political status, might have different rights and responsibilities at any one moment. The essential fairness of liberal equality is preserved by ensuring all citizens are equally situated in relation to individuals of the same age. Thus rights and responsibilities will come in at a fixed age for all citizens, despite differences in capacities between these individuals.

The whole lives account thus offers a way of justifying the currently existing legal situation in modern liberal states in a way that avoids the serious difficulties that plague other accounts. Practically, it is not troubled by the fact that children are often very similar to adults and each child develops at a different rate. These undeniable facts of human development were fatal to the threshold account.

Normatively, the whole-lives view justifies different treatment of children while recognizing a crucially important fact, that children are just as much citizens as adults. This view therefore suggests that children are owed justifications for the laws that apply to them in just the same way as adults. This view follows naturally from the core purposes of political liberalism and the principle of legitimacy. The force and intuitive appeal of this principle is the thought that the state is simply the shared power of citizens themselves and its actions must thus be justifiable to all of them. Laws and institutions must take account of each citizen's relationship to the state and the principle of legitimacy which governs this relationship.

Children are just as much a part of society as adults, and are equally subject to the

laws and policies of the state. We cannot ignore their status as individuals simply because they are, for the moment, in a more vulnerable position than adult citizens. These differences in capacities can, and indeed must, imply that children should be treated differently, but they cannot imply that they are forgotten altogether.

Chapter 7- Justification to children

In the previous chapter I argued that the principle of legitimacy must incorporate children as well as adults. This implies that political liberals must design institutions with children in mind, and must consider the possible objections that might arise from the perspective of the children in society. Liberal institutions face a serious problem of legitimacy if they fail to take the special circumstances of childhood into account.

One implication of this is distributional. Children have different physical and mental capabilities, as well as different nutritional needs from adults. Their different faculties and requirements imply that they will not normally be able to participate in the economic life of the state. They will therefore require special care in order to ensure that their needs are met.

For the purposes of this thesis, the more important aspect of the principle of legitimacy concerns the inculcation of beliefs to the next generation. While it is usually reasonable to assume that adults hold a developed comprehensive view, children's views are in the process of being formed. This implies that liberal institutions play a very different role for children than they do in the case of adults. When it comes to adults, liberal institutions respond to the existence of different comprehensive views within society. Political liberals thus ask whether a given set of institutions can be justified without contradicting the tenets of the

comprehensive doctrines held in society. In the case of children, the role of institutions, principally schools, is to play a part in shaping the content of those comprehensive views. We must therefore ask whether children could fairly object to the way in which they come to acquire beliefs and the content of the education they receive.

This raises the further question of how to model children's possible objections to policy proposals. Obviously, this test cannot imply that we actually justify policies to the children in society as they are now. This would imply creating a defence of liberal institutions that can be understood by young children, and then a debate with children about the effects these institutions will have on them. Clearly this idea is a non-starter. The reasoning behind liberal institutions is nuanced and complex and it is patently unreasonable to ask all children to be able to grapple with these questions.

Instead we must use some theoretical device to model the possible objections of children. One possible solution is to rely on a hypothetical agent who is modelled such as to be able to make claims on children's behalf. This account is reminiscent of the original position, in which hypothetical parties reason over the principles of justice on behalf of actual members of society. A model on these lines is defended by Robert Noggle (2002), who proposes that adults act in a fiduciary relationship towards children, similar to the role played by lawyers in relation to their clients. Just as most people are incapable of making a complex legal defence in court, we assume that children are incapable of making their own claims to society's resources. Thus just as lawyers act solely with their clients interests in mind, we model a figure who makes claims on whether any given policy can be reasonably rejected from the perspective of a given child.

There are two main ways this agent could be modelled. On the first account, the fiduciary agent would hold a given view about children's welfare and make claims on children's behalf. On the second, the fiduciary agent is modelled as neutral between the competing comprehensive doctrines held in society. The first approach is inappropriate because it is unclear what comprehensive views the

fiduciary agent should hold, and hence what kind of education they believe would be beneficial to individuals as they grow up. Citizens with different comprehensive views will, naturally, take different positions on whether a given upbringing is in a child's best interests. Religious individuals might believe that an education encouraging religious faith is enormously beneficial to children. By contrast, other individuals might think such an education to be superfluous or even harmful. In acting on someone's behalf, we must therefore have a deep knowledge and understanding of their beliefs and values, even if we do not share them. However, the fiduciary actor cannot have this knowledge in this case. We are faced with this problem since we do not know what the child's view will be. Indeed, decisions about the legitimate content of education are one of the things which will affect the shape of the views which the child will eventually come to hold.

In light of the problem of deciding which views to give the fiduciary guardian, the second strategy I referred to might seem more promising. On this account the fiduciary guardian is modelled as an actor who is neutral between different comprehensive views. On such a model this guardian would not raise objections that depend upon the acceptance of any once comprehensive doctrine. They would not therefore object to a secular education on the basis that it is contrary to a certain religious creed. Unfortunately, by definition this model of no use when considering what form a child's non-political upbringing should be, since the relevant question is precisely which non-political values are appropriate to teach to children and which they might legitimately object to. Modelling an adequate protector of children's interests will thus require factoring in some assumptions about what kind of life is good for children to live.

Future Reasonable Rejection

Therefore, the model of a fiduciary guardian is not applicable in this case. A different way of modelling children's objections is offered by Matthew Clayton. On this view, we are concerned with the possible future reasonable rejection of institutions and policies. That is, while children themselves cannot raise objections to different schemes of education we should take seriously their interests by

considering the objections that they might be able to raise against their own upbringing once they have grown up. The advantage of this approach is that it takes seriously the possible complaints of children, without forcing the state itself to make judgments between competing comprehensive views. We do not ask whether a certain upbringing has itself disadvantaged a child (a judgment reliant on an opinion of non-political values) but rather whether a child was treated unfairly.

However, while Clayton's model is superior to Noggle's, his specific use of it is open to objection. According to Clayton, any scheme of non-political values is open to the possibility of future reasonable rejection. For him, this follows directly from the circumstances of reasonable pluralism, which imply that no comprehensive doctrine will be held by all reasonable citizens. As such, there are reasonable grounds to reject any doctrine. Thus, just as no doctrine can be reasonably imposed by one group of society on the rest, so parents and schools cannot aim to inculcate any scheme of non-political values since this set could be reasonably rejected by the citizens the children will one day become.

The argument from future reasonable rejection is thus used to support Clayton's overarching position, which as I outlined in chapter four, is that parents ought not to be able to pass on any comprehensive view to their children. Since any comprehensive values could be reasonably rejected in the future, the only values we can legitimately pass on are encapsulated in the notion of a 'sense of justice'. We must teach children to be good and just citizens, but we cannot shape their lives beyond this requirement. Critically, the argument is structured around the intentions of parents and other adults. The fundamental concern is not over what beliefs children come to hold, but how they came to hold them. Specifically, whether the beliefs they hold are the result of other individuals intentionally inculcating these views in them.

The problem for Clayton's position in the context of this argument is that we might have reason to worry about the content of the views children come to acquire, not merely the intentions of those who pass them on. This will be

discussed at length later, but at this point I suggest that we might have reason to worry about children acquiring views which lead them to self-harm, even if no one had intended them to have such beliefs. Once this is recognised, it is clear Clayton's blanket ban on passing on beliefs is not necessarily the best way to safeguard the interests of children.

On any plausible account of children's acquisition of beliefs and values, the nature of their parents' views, and those of the community in which they grow up, will still play an important role. This would be true even if no parent intentionally tried to shape their children's beliefs. The mechanisms by which beliefs are transmitted from one person to another are various and complex. However, to take a simple case: even on Clayton's model, adults will still be permitted – and will – converse about their beliefs in the presence of their children. In so far as parents tend to be important role models for children we might then expect children to come to hold similar views to those of their parents. The effect of communities will only increase this trend. If children grow up in communities defined by one set of beliefs or creeds, then many of their early experiences and relationships with others will be defined by these beliefs. Again, there is thus a powerful reason to expect children to be pushed towards the views of their adult guardians, even when adults do not intentionally seek to advance their own views.

Thus, Clayton's revised political liberal position fails to consider the possibility of children coming to hold views that might prove troubling and harmful to them in later life. In fairness to Clayton, this is not his intention. His theory attempts to ensure that children come to hold beliefs in the right way. Nevertheless, it is instructive that Clayton's model cannot avoid the possible problem identified above. We can imagine individuals who have serious objections to the beliefs that they learnt as children, not merely to the intentions of the people who raised them. In the end, it might be the case that we cannot accept these complaints. However, Clayton's model cannot take such objections seriously since it focuses entirely on the way in which children acquire doctrines and not on the content and implications of the doctrines themselves.

Therefore, gauging the possible objections of children will require more than simply an assessment of the intentions of their parents or other adult guardians. Instead, we must look at the content of the beliefs they acquire, and the environment in which they grow up. Reflecting on the implications of political liberal principles shows that children will indeed have strong grounds to object to an education which has only civic aims. Specifically, I will show that the most significant feature which distinguishes reasonable doctrines from unreasonable ones is whether their adherents are able to act as good liberal citizens. This understanding of reasonableness downplays the importance of the effects of holding a doctrine on one's own life. This understanding of the criteria of reasonableness has important implications for the beliefs that parents can legitimately pass on to their children.

To show how this criterion might be problematic, I outline a range of cases in which, intuitively, the parents' actions are troubling and perhaps open to objection. For each though, I show that political liberals have difficulty in taking seriously the damage that might be done to children. The conclusion of these arguments is that political liberalism is blind to features of doctrines which might be critically important when we consider their effects on children who are taught them. The implication of this is that political liberalism does not meet children's interests in the way that liberal institutions must do in order to remain legitimate.

The political criterion of reasonableness

In this section I analyse what kinds of views parents might want to pass on to their children. This is important if we are to consider whether allowing parents to pass on these beliefs can be justified to children. In the ideal case political liberalism considers, all citizens will hold reasonable comprehensive doctrines. This is because holding a reasonable comprehensive view is a necessary condition of being a reasonable citizen. Thus, while individuals who hold unreasonable views might still want to pass on these beliefs, and this may indeed prove problematic, this is a side issue. The core issue for a properly functioning political liberal model

is whether there is a possible problem with those doctrines that are classed as reasonable.

Analysing this problem will thus require engaging with one of the most difficult issues raised by *Political Liberalism*: what differentiates a reasonable comprehensive doctrine from an unreasonable one. A useful tool in doing this is differentiating two different senses of the notion of the reasonable. Following Erin Kelly, we can distinguish between the political and the metaphysical aspects of the reasonable (Kelly and McPherson, 2001: 38-55).

The political aspects of reasonableness concern citizens' relationships to the state and to one another. Citizens are reasonable in so far as they are willing to propose and abide by fair terms of co-operation with other citizens, whom they view as their civic equals. Metaphysical notions are those that relate to a doctrine's internal coherence and plausibility. We would consider a doctrine metaphysically reasonable if we believe there are strong reasons in support of its conclusions, whereas we consider a doctrine metaphysically unreasonable if we believe it to be held on the basis of faulty logic or dubious evidence.

Views are obviously reasonable if they are both politically reasonable and metaphysically plausible. Likewise, we have no trouble classing views which are both dangerous and absurd as unreasonable. The pertinent question is thus how to class views which meet one, but not both of these criteria, which means we must understand which takes precedence when classifying the reasonableness of any given view. We face this issue because many of the most difficult cases occur when these two aspects of the reasonable diverge. That is, when a doctrine is metaphysically plausible but is politically unreasonable, or when it is politically reasonable, but metaphysically unreasonable.

Our society contains numerous comprehensive conceptions which fit both of these possible outcomes. On the one hand, perhaps the most disturbing incidences of violence or other illiberal acts are those which are carried out on the basis of some well formed and at least loosely coherent ideology. The basis of such an ideology might thus be classified as metaphysically reasonable, but clearly politically

unreasonable. An example would be a violent interpretation of a major religious faith or political ideology. On the other hand, we can think of many doctrines that seem deeply implausible when considered by generally accepted standards of reasoning but whose adherents are law abiding and politically engaged citizens (for example, individuals who believe that the Earth is flat).

Critically for the issues raised in this chapter, Rawls and other political liberals are committed to thinking that the political aspects of the reasonable take precedence over the metaphysical. That is to say that *Political Liberalism* considers citizens whose doctrines are implausible but compatible with liberal principles as reasonable, whereas citizens whose doctrines are coherent but illiberal are considered unreasonable. Rawls suggests as much when he writes 'observe here that being reasonable is not an epistemological idea (though it has epistemological elements). Rather it is part of a political ideal of democratic citizenship that includes the ideal of public reason' (Rawls, 1993: 162).

More specifically, classifying doctrines as reasonable or unreasonable is done on the basis of political factors. Rawls writes that 'we avoid excluding doctrines as unreasonable without strong grounds based on clear aspects of the reasonable itself' (159). The reasonable in this sense is a moral power distinct from the rational, and refers to the ability of citizens to propose and abide by fair terms of co-operation. Thus it is only when doctrines imperil the ability of citizens to co-operate on fair terms that we should consider them to be unreasonable.

Indeed, Rawls recognises that this understanding of reasonable doctrines implies adopting much more lax criteria of reasoning than we would generally find appropriate in other matters. He suggests that 'within that [background] culture we may regard many doctrines as plainly unreasonable, or untrue, that we think it is correct to count as reasonable by the criteria in the text. That criterion we should see as giving rather minimal conditions appropriate for the aims of political liberalism' (Rawls 160).

As is suggested in this passage, setting these metaphysical criteria loosely is essential for the project of *Political Liberalism*. Philosophers are familiar with the

fact that even the relatively well developed ethical theories Rawls considers (such as Kantianism and utilitarianism) can be argued to be misguided. Since these arguments show no signs of abating, it would be disastrous if the liberal state were in the business of trying to settle them. It would be even more damaging, and of course illegitimate, if the state were to deliberate and decide on whether religious doctrines were correct in their interpretations of their sacred texts, or whether the beliefs on which they are founded are metaphysically plausible.

Furthermore, our intuitive understanding of liberal politics supports this emphasis on political factors. Acting unjustly for sophisticated or complex reasons is not fundamentally different from acting unjustly for any other reason. Nor do such sophisticated unreasonable people seem to present a particular problem of justification; we are not worried about the fact that a terrorist cannot reconcile laws which preserve freedom of religion with their own doctrines. Conversely, where religious believers or secular individuals are law abiding and civil to their fellow citizens then we are inclined to treat them as reasonable citizens no matter what their fundamental beliefs.

Therefore, there is both strong textual evidence, and there are good independent reasons, to believe that Rawls' position emphasises the political implications of doctrines rather than their inherent plausibility when classifying them as reasonable or unreasonable. We should not then think of reasonable doctrines as only those that we would ourselves consider to be 'reasonable' answers to the many questions with which we are faced in life. The sense of reasonable employed by Rawls is much wider and employs a laxer standard of reasoning. Furthermore, setting these standards loosely is essential if political liberal principles are to have the wide scope envisioned for them by Rawls.

Indeed, one notable theorist has claimed that even the loose metaphysical criteria outlined by Rawls are both irrelevant to the purposes of political liberalism, and pernicious in their implications for liberal principles. Stephen Lecce argues that political liberalism ought to drop the epistemic criteria of reasonableness entirely, and that it is the fact of simple pluralism rather than reasonable pluralism which

has normative importance. The consequence of this is that individuals will be counted as reasonable as long as they act appropriately towards other citizens; the content of their views is entirely irrelevant. This is premised on the attractive thought that 'philosophical enlightenment should not be a precondition of moral status in a political society founded on the idea of a social contract' (Lecce, 2008: 173). Thinking about the aims of *Political Liberalism*, and our intuitive understanding of the criteria for membership in a liberal community, thus pushes towards lax metaphysical criteria or even doing away with these criteria entirely.

Damage done by doctrines

In the previous section of the thesis, I argued that political liberals are committed to giving parents a relatively free hand in decisions regarding their children's education. Added to this, I have now shown that political liberalism is bound to regard doctrines as reasonable largely on the basis of political rather than metaphysical factors. In both cases, political liberals are led to this position by the core aims of the project. It is illegitimate for the state to foster ideals to govern the whole of life, thus the aims of education are restricted to engendering an effective sense of justice. This implies that the state will be silent with regards to aspects of education which are not related to this civic aim. Likewise, the relatively lax understanding of reasonableness is explicitly developed in light of the purposes of political liberalism.

However, a significant problem emerges as a result of the combination of these two positions. The implication of these theoretical views is that a multitude of parents will pass on to children doctrines which may be dubious or unjustified if viewed from more conventional standards of reasoning. I will now argue that we intuitively think that some of these doctrines might be harmful to the children concerned. That is, that children acquiring some sets of beliefs, or non-political values, might itself be a problem.

To help shape this argument, I will sketch out various actions that parents might perform on their children. We might think of these as on a continuum from the most seriously harmful to the relatively benign. At the one end are those actions

which seem obviously unjustifiable on any plausible theory of children's rights and parental authority. However, next to these, I will argue, are other actions which seem somewhat similar, but which political liberals have serious difficulty in countering. The difficulty emerges from the unwillingness of political liberals to consider either the plausibility of doctrines, or their implications for individuals beyond their relevance to civic matters.

At one end, then, are actions that are simply abusive or neglectful. Ex hypothesi, the parents' reasons for their actions are not plausibly derived from any comprehensive view or conception of the good, but are simply the result of, for example, spite or anger. This obviously includes parents who physically abuse their children, and we would also include some cases of criminal neglect. The only countervailing reason against the state intervening here is parents' rights of control over their children, but surely no plausible theory of parents' rights extends to the right to abuse their children.

Standing next to these cases are individuals who perform superficially similar abusive actions, but who do so for reasons which arise from a reasonably coherent comprehensive view. Similar to cases of abuse we might think here of religious individuals who induct their children into a faith via a painful procedure. Related to neglect, we might imagine parents who fail to meet their children's basic nutritional or developmental needs because of the tenets of their comprehensive doctrine.¹⁶

Once again, this case calls into question the sphere of parental rights. Notice though that the fact that parents have reasons which are based on their beliefs does not seem to give them a significantly stronger case than that which could be offered by merely neglectful parents. In those liberal democracies to which political liberalism is addressed, it is against the law to abuse one's children no

¹⁶ A recent example of this is the case of Areni Manuelyan, who died because of a chest infection induced by malnutrition. Areni had been raised on a purely fruitarian diet., <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/1542293.stm> [check the rules for how to cite websites]

matter what the reason. Thus, these cases do not seem to pose a significant challenge for political liberals. Political liberals can coherently support a limit to parental authority without violating the principle of legitimacy. Just as the state can restrict those who would attack or harm other adult citizens because they believe that they are required to do so by their religion, so the state can limit what parents can do to children even in cases where the regulated action is inspired by the parents' beliefs.

As we progress along the continuum, though, things become more difficult. Here we have cases where the harm caused by parents is not physical abuse, but instead results directly from children accepting the content of parental beliefs. That is, cases where parents' beliefs are so troubling to young children that they develop recognisable and sometimes severe mental health problems. Clear examples of this emerge when we consider so called 'cults' and other fringe belief systems.

For instance, consider the case of those children who were inducted into a cult called the House of Judah. These children, who were used as a case study for a psychological investigation, had received an extremely intense education, a key tenet of which was the utter avoidance of sin (mainly of sexual sins), and a continual focus on the extreme punishments sinners will receive in the afterlife. The study found that 'ex-cultists appear to be much younger than their chronological age and display an asexual innocence. They act childlike although they may be well into their twenties. Unsurprisingly, these children were prone to develop a series of serious mental health conditions later in life.' (Goldburg, 2006: 167).

Many people's immediate reaction is to consider this case as analogous to that of parents who physically harm their children for religious or doctrinal reasons. While we accept that the parents may sincerely believe their creed, and are thus differentiated from merely negligent or lazy parents, their beliefs do not seem in any way sufficient to allow them to treat their children in a way that causes harm and suffering.

However, notice that the reply we used in the case of physical abuse is not open to us when we consider mental and developmental harm. In the former case, I said political liberals would tend to argue that there was a principled boundary to parental authority which did not extend to harming children, no matter what the parents' reasons. In this way, political liberals can avoid any consideration of the doctrines parents use to justify these actions, and merely focus on the limits that govern citizens' conduct towards one another. In the case of mental health problems that arise from having been brought up in a certain faith or other conception of the good, this response is not effective. In these cases, all the parents did is to teach their children their beliefs. It is the very content of their beliefs, not the actions they prescribe, which has led to what appears to be obvious harm to children. We might also think here of children who are taught by their parents that it is wrong to receive blood transfusions, who then go on to lose their lives in operations or accidents. Again, it is the content of their ethical beliefs which appears to have harmed them.

At this point, we may feel inclined to argue that the beliefs that these parents are attempting to pass on are foolish or absurd. We might conjecture that it is only the fact that children are impressionable at a young age which leads them to accept these bizarre beliefs. Thus, we might think that the state could intervene in these cases because of the fringe nature of the parent's beliefs. Unfortunately, this reply is inadequate for two reasons.

Firstly, it seems difficult to separate out 'fringe' beliefs from more mainstream ones purely on what Kelly terms metaphysical grounds. Attempting to argue that parents cannot pass on such fringe beliefs will necessarily involve the political liberal state in precisely those discussions it wishes to avoid. So, for instance, many consider Scientology to be a deeply misguided set of beliefs. Its tenets seem bizarre and their justification doubtful when judged by accepted standards of reasoning. However, political liberals would surely not feel comfortable attacking a doctrine on these grounds. We cannot feel confident that the tenets of scientology are patently more absurd than all of the Gods, spirits and afterlives which are held by the more established religions. Moreover, even if we did feel confident that

Scientology was different, it is unclear what standards of reasoning we could use to make this judgement while maintaining the standard of public neutrality.

The second reason we cannot simply ignore this problem is that these problems are not only restricted to cults or other fringe belief systems. There are many important examples in which, from a secular perspective, the beliefs which are passed down by members of well established religions cause serious and identifiable harms to children. We might think here of the difficulties faced by homosexual children growing up in some socially conservative religious communities in America. These will usually be two fold, there may be problems in reconciling one's feelings with the beliefs one has learned in the community, and if children choose to express their sexuality they may face alienation from their friends and family.

Where parents teach their children such anti-homosexual beliefs, there are essentially two ways of looking at the situation. From the parents' perspective, while their children may have to go through difficult times because of their beliefs, attempting to push them away from homosexuality is undoubtedly the right course of action. If we take seriously the belief that homosexuality is a sin, then pursuing a homosexual life is contrary to the best interests of the child, and may lead to serious repercussions for his later existence.

However, if we take the perspective of either secular individuals, or religious believers who do not take homosexuality to be a sin, the situation looks entirely different. From these perspectives, an individual can have a flourishing and rich life as a homosexual. Further, many secular individuals would not even accept the premise that people could choose to be gay or straight at all. Therefore, for many individuals who do not accept that homosexuality is a sin, demonising it and trying to turn children away from acknowledging and expressing their sexual natures, is both irrational and cruel.

Our perspective on this case thus depends significantly, if not entirely, on our opinion of the doctrinal claims of the parents. In so far as the state has a particular duty to protect the children in its care it is thus difficult to avoid taking a position

on these controversial religious or metaphysical claims. Taking any side here though will involve the liberal state in precisely those discussions Rawls sought to avoid, namely, what ought to be considered the correct standards of reasoning about the deepest questions of metaphysics and ethics.

Moving still further along the continuum are cases in which there is a possible harm to children which inheres simply in holding a bizarre or incoherent doctrine. In this case the possible harm is independent from any damage which might result from the effects this doctrine will have on their emotional wellbeing or interaction with others. For example, consider a case in which a child is taught that the Earth is flat. Further, imagine that the parents of this child decide to home-school their children, and use course books and work which reinforce this belief and they avoid material offering conflicting views. The result of this education might thus be adults who have this false belief. While this example might seem trivial, it might still have serious impact on such an individual's relationships with others. More serious cases of this type are those in which parents seek to teach their children beliefs which have been refuted by modern science, such that the earth was created in seven days or that the whole of history has occurred in only six thousand years. Again, we might perhaps point to problems which result from this belief, but the more fundamental worry must surely be that a child with these beliefs has been excluded from important evidence about the actual state of the world and our place in it.

Looking at the range of cases I have sketched out, we see the serious problem for the political liberal position. There is, I conjecture, general agreement that the state has good cause to act in those cases at the extreme end of the spectrum. Where parents are abusive the state has good cause to intervene. This seems true if they are simply negligent or if their reasons are entwined with a conception of the good. There are also strong grounds to worry about the transmission of certain kinds of beliefs, even where this stops short of actual physical abuse. There may be serious mental and developmental consequences for children of being taught to believe certain things.

The problem, though, is differentiating these last cases from those that might be similar, but which arise from more mainstream comprehensive accounts. The obvious counter is to say that the beliefs of groups like the House of Judah are absurd, and the claim of the parents to be allowed to transmit them to their children cannot possibly justify damaging the long-term health of those children. However, this response is a difficult one for political liberals to pursue. The lax standards of reasoning used in classifying doctrines means that many doctrines which seem dubious must nevertheless be classified as reasonable. Moreover, these lax standards are essential if ordinary orthodox religious beliefs are not to be excluded as unreasonable.

Furthermore, specifying a doctrine as harmful to children requires elaborating a view of what is in fact in children's best interests. However, any such view will require taking a position on what is valuable in life, and as such will be ruled out by the principle of legitimacy. Core elements of the political liberal view thus imply that the state will be silent in a number of cases where we may feel it has a duty to intervene.

Here then we see the consequences of considering the political aspects of doctrines and setting loose metaphysical criteria. Rawls argues that we should consider reasonable even doctrines which we could not seriously entertain for ourselves. These doctrines are not worthy of serious consideration, presumably, because of manifest flaws in their reasoning or the pernicious effects of pursuing a life dedicated to their principles. The problem for Rawls' position is that while he would not seriously consider these doctrines for himself, political liberalism is committed to allowing parents to pass these doctrines on to their children.

Returning to the issue of the legitimacy of institutions which affect children, this range of cases suggests that political liberalism as currently construed faces a serious difficulty. By focussing almost entirely on the political implications of doctrines, it is far from clear that education will do enough to safeguard the interest of children. Many of the issues which are important here relate to the actual plausibility of a doctrine, and the kind of life it will recommend. Political

liberals thus ignore the effects of education on the children themselves, and only seriously consider whether education prepares children to live together with others. This creates a problem of legitimacy in so far as children can reasonably object to an institution designed without proper consideration of their own interests and claims. Moreover, core notions of political liberalism entail it must remain silent even in cases where, at least intuitively, there seems clear reason to intervene.

Conclusion and Recap

The previous section outlined the implications of political liberal principles for education, and argued that these were consonant with Rawls' own account rather than those of some of his critics. Critically, the argument running through that section was that parents would generally be allowed significant authority to control their children's upbringing, with the only limits being that they must fulfil the civic requirements of liberalism. Chapter five considered these requirements in detail, and argued that they were far less stringent than is often supposed. This therefore implies that parents in a political liberal society will have significant freedom to pass on their beliefs, whatever they may be.

This section considered the normative implications of this, and argued that this implication of political liberalism was unacceptable and in conflict with the core aims of the project. To show this, I argued that political liberal institutions must be reasonably justifiable to children in society as well as to adult citizens. Children must count as full citizens because any attempt to exclude them will fail, as I showed through discussion and critique of the threshold view. This view is the natural device to exclude children from full citizenship, since it both excludes children for the right reasons (their diminished faculties) and allows for all adult citizens to be treated equally despite differences between them. However, a closer look at the circumstances of human development revealed that this view was incoherent, and could not plausibly divide adults from children. Instead I posited that the whole lives view provided a better understanding of children's political status. The most important consequence of this view was that the

political liberal principle of legitimacy must in fact apply to children as well. The attraction of this principle was that laws must be justifiable to all individuals who are subject to them, a consideration which surely applies to children.

This chapter considered the implications of this requirement. I argued that the best way to assess whether a policy which affected children was legitimate was by considering the future reasonable rejections adults might make to their upbringing. Consideration of the types of claims adults might make showed that we must be concerned with the content of the views that children acquire, not merely with the process of acquisition. Given this criterion, I argued that political liberal institutions (as described in section 2) face a serious problem. Deep seated aspects of political liberalism imply that this view focuses on the political aspects of doctrines, rather than on their metaphysical factors. However, the metaphysical aspects of doctrines are hugely important to the children who are taught them. Children can legitimately object if they are taught beliefs which are incoherent or obviously implausible, and may have legitimate grounds to object in many other cases.

On the face of it, this argument might seem a rather technical critique of political liberalism, focussing on the scope of the principle of legitimacy and on the relationship between the metaphysical and political aspects of reasonable comprehensive doctrines. However, taken together these discussions reveal a serious problem within the structure of political liberalism. The impetus for political liberalism is the desire to justify liberal institutions to all members of society, despite the divisions between citizens on matters of ethics, religion, and so on. Given this impetus, the principle of legitimacy must surely apply to children as well, who come into society through no choice of their own and are just as much subject to its laws as adults. Our common institutions have immense impact on children's development and upbringing, both directly through education and by shaping the environment in which parents raise their children.

To respond fairly to pluralism, the political liberal state refuses to compare the merits of different comprehensive views. However, as we saw in chapter five, this

refusal to compare comprehensive doctrines also leads to a general presumption in favour of the wishes of parents, who will want to pass on their beliefs to their children. Further, while parents will necessarily hold reasonable comprehensive doctrines, the criterion of reasonableness is set by largely political rather than metaphysical factors. Political liberals are mainly concerned with the effects a doctrine will have on social co-operation, not on the lives of those who hold it. However, it is precisely the implications of a doctrine on the life of a believer which concerns children who are being taught these views. Children can thus legitimately complain that their interests are being ignored by political liberalism.

Section 4

A neutral defence of a liberal education

Reaching this final section it appears as if I have argued myself into a corner. On the one hand, I have defended Rawls' account of liberal legitimacy and argued that it is the most appropriate response to pluralism. On the other, I have argued that this approach encounters significant difficulties in the case of education. Precisely because of the principle of legitimacy, political liberalism seems bound to ignore some of the important effects of education on children's lives. Political liberals are committed to focussing almost exclusively on the civic aims of education. This myopia is a serious problem since it implies that political liberals fail to address adequately children's interests in the formation of institutions. Children's reasonable rejection of the limits of what can be done to them being set by only the need for a purely civic education constitutes a serious threat to the legitimacy of the entire political liberal project.

The root of the problem for political liberals lies in two seemingly contradictory arguments that have been advanced in the thesis. The first of these was developed in section one. Here I argued that we cannot rely on contested theory of human flourishing when responding to circumstances of pluralism. To rely on any single comprehensive doctrine illegitimately privileges the views of one section of society at the expense of the many different reasonable views which are held by other citizens. However, in the later part of the thesis I argued that we cannot avoid

relying on some account of what is in children's best interests when we consider different schemes of education. Attempting to eschew all views about the good leads unavoidably to a situation in which some children are raised in an environment which is deeply damaging to their future development and life chances. Having the state's policy based on an account of children's interests is thus seemingly both impermissible and indispensable.

Put in these terms, it might seem that the thesis thus far simply offers up a difficult choice. We can either hold on to the thought that the state must be neutral between competing comprehensive views, but accept that this will sometimes have tragic repercussions in the case of upbringing and education. Alternatively, the arguments I have presented might be taken to show that the case of education implies that the goal of neutrality should be abandoned. The conclusion of the thesis would thus be that liberals should adopt a perfectionist account premised upon promoting autonomy, despite the fact that autonomy will not be the guiding ideal in the lives of many reasonable citizens.

However, seeing the choice in these stark terms is a deeply problematic response to the issues raised by the thesis. Neither a complete abandonment of state neutrality nor avoiding our responsibilities to our children is a palatable course of action. Fortunately, this dilemma is not as stark as it might appear. I will argue that this problem only seems intractable if we accept the hard line positions which currently prevail within the literature. Specifically we should question the assumption made by political liberals that the principle of legitimacy implies that the state cannot take sides in disputes regarding non-political values, and thus can take no view on what is in any particular citizen's best interest. Likewise, we should reject attempts to develop accounts of children's interests which rely upon assumptions that conflict with reasonable comprehensive doctrines, and will thus be deeply and fundamentally antithetical to many widely held beliefs in society.

The goal is thus to develop an understanding of legitimacy that captures the most intuitively compelling aspects of Rawls' view, but allows sufficient space for the state to act on a reasonable theory of what is in children's interests. This goal

cannot be met while the justification for political institutions remains entirely freestanding from non-political questions. Remaining entirely freestanding from questions of ethics and metaphysics seems to be an attractive way of responding to pluralism when we consider the case of adults, but once we consider the case of children we see that this position implies an abrogation of important responsibilities. Instead, I propose that political liberals should aim to ensure that attending state education is an experience compatible with holding any of the reasonable comprehensive doctrines found in society, though this experience may change the way elements of these doctrines are understood.

If this goal is met, it would imply that enforcing a mandatory curriculum on all students would not preclude them from endorsing any reasonable comprehensive doctrine. In this way, individuals do not have to give up on their core beliefs in order to reconcile themselves to the justification of liberal institutions and the school system in particular. In terms of justification, an education which is compatible with differing reasonable doctrines is far more likely to garner support from an overlapping consensus than more sectarian alternatives. The ideal scenario would be one in which each reasonable citizen would be able to see the value of state education from within her own doctrine. However, given the tenets of the doctrines actually held in society, and the attitudes of many citizens, this scenario seems unlikely. Protecting the interests of children is likely to require teaching children in ways that differ from their parents wishes.

Despite being justified in a less controversial way than perfectionist theories, a political liberal education would thus still face serious objections if actually implemented in society. Indeed, the education policy I envision would likely be far more controversial (with parents) than the one implied by Rawls' account. Given the ecumenical aims of political liberalism, these parental objections must be taken seriously. All things being equal, we should want as many citizens as possible to agree with the policies and institutions of the liberal state. However, in light of the claims that children have on society, these parental objections must eventually be overridden. The continuing hope is that by couching our defence of education in more neutral terms, rather than ones which are explicitly perfectionist or rely

on assumptions which totally incompatible with many comprehensive conceptions, we can offer a justification of policy to citizens which takes seriously the nature of their objections.

The practical implications of this view are very similar to the kinds of liberal education proposed by thinkers such as Brighouse and Callan. Most importantly, my account is designed to foster children's skills of debate and scrutiny in education. I tie these skills to two different aspects of upbringing. These are the acquisition of comprehensive doctrines and giving children skills to help them prosper in whatever plan of life they eventually adopt. The argument running through these chapters is that the role of education in a liberal society ought to be giving children the skills to make an informed and reasoned choice between competing doctrines, and providing them with general skills that are useful to individuals who hold a wide variety of different beliefs. In contrast to more sectarian accounts, both of these roles of education can be performed while meeting the test of liberal legitimacy.

In chapter eight, I will be concerned with the value of children being able to think and reason for themselves, and to subject the views which are taught to them at home, in school, and in the community, to critical scrutiny. In chapter nine, I deal with the objection that the kind of education necessary to meet this goal will be inimical to the life plans of many reasonable citizens. This objection, if vindicated, would be deeply problematic since it would imply that my account of education faces a similar problem of legitimacy to that faced by a purely civic one. My response is that the skills provided by education, such as knowledge of science and history and critical reasoning, will be useful to individuals who hold a wide variety of different comprehensive doctrines. In particular, I will focus on giving children the ability to live an independent life in a society like ours.

Chapter 8-Acquiring a Conception of the Good

In light of the arguments of the previous sections, political liberalism must adapt to safeguard the interests of children, and take more seriously the ways in which comprehensive views come to be formed rather than simply responding to existing doctrines. The problem is that meeting these concerns will require moving beyond an education system which is designed solely to meet a series of civic aims. In turn, this move threatens the legitimacy of the liberal state since designing an education system to promote children's welfare seems to require an account of children's interests. Developing even a minimal account of children's interests seems to rely on contested assumptions about human flourishing and the good life. Protecting the interests of children thus seems to undermine the extent to which the state can fairly respond to the fact of reasonable pluralism.

Instead of attempting to develop a theory of children's best interest, I will propose that political liberals should concentrate on ensuring that children acquire comprehensive views in the right way. Specifically, this means that children should, first, be aware of alternative positions to those which are held by their parents or communities, and, second, should be in a position to consider the reasons in favour of holding any particular view. To make an informed choice in this way will require children learn skills of debate and critique. To promote these skills, I advocate lessons devoted to thinking about ethical and political dilemmas,

during which children will learn about the responses to fundamental issues of ethics and theology which are offered by different members of society. Further, in order to make an informed choice about many important questions, children need a grounding in scientific and historical material. Given the ways in which these subjects interact with established comprehensive doctrines, education in these matters will likely be deeply controversial. However, I aim to show that this account can be justified in a way that is consistent with the most intuitively appealing aspects of the principle of legitimacy.

Ethical education

Given that this thesis deals with the problems caused by pluralism over questions of the good, ethical and political questions are a natural starting point for developing my own account of education. Properly preparing children to live in a pluralistic society will require education to have a much stronger focus on the ethical dilemmas they will face as they grow up, and the different ways comprehensive doctrines attempt to resolve them.

The kind of education I am proposing will mandate that children consider the fundamental underpinning of different comprehensive doctrines as well as seriously considering the implications of these views for controversial ethical questions. On my account, the curriculum would mandate that children discuss even highly controversial issues of the type from which parents can currently remove their children. Of course, given both common standards of civility and the aims of political liberalism, we must be extremely careful to teach controversial issues in a way that is respectful to each of the differing reasonable views held in society. Nevertheless, respecting pluralism should not mean simply avoiding discussion of these issues in class. Avoiding these issues, or covering them in a way that merely outlines the views of others rather than seriously considering the implications of each view, undermines the extent to which children can seriously evaluate the belief systems which exist in society. It is counterproductive to avoid issues simply because they are controversial or possibly even offensive to some parents. Not discussing these issues in class only increases the chance that views

are held on these subjects simply because they are the views of parents or others in the community.

An important practical point regarding the consideration of these different ethical views is that a dry presentation from a teacher is rarely the best way to introduce children to the variety of views present in society. A better approach is one in which children receive lessons about different faiths and philosophical doctrines from committed believers. Harry Brighouse quotes John Stuart Mill who writes that:

“Nor is it enough that he should hear the arguments of adversaries from his own teachers, presented as they state them, and accompanied by what they offer as refutations. That is not the way to do justice to the arguments or bring them into real contact with his own mind. He must be able to hear them from persons who actually believe them; who defend them in earnest and do their utmost for them.” (Brighouse, 2006: 25)

Where possible, ethical lessons would thus be guided by ‘guest speakers’, members of different faiths or adherents of different ways of living, who would talk to children about the content of their view and the way it affects their lives. As well as these lessons devoted to learning about different doctrines, children would then talk through real world cases which raise controversial ethical questions. These kinds of lessons would likely face serious parental objections. While schools and teachers should obviously make every effort to create a safe and comfortable learning environment, we can imagine numerous cases in which these lessons might be difficult for children. Guest speakers may well present views that are very different from those to which the children are used, and some would hold views that some of the children might find offensive. A concern for children’s welfare might therefore suggest that schools should avoid contentious subjects and stick to matters about which children feel comfortable.

However, while this response is understandable, it does not provide a compelling reason to restrict the content of schooling. Of course, we must make allowance for the fact that children may be too young to understand complex dilemmas fully. It

is obviously inappropriate to teach many issues to younger children. However, older children will encounter many of the same problems and issues faced by adults and will become independent adult citizens soon. Avoiding issues altogether in school on the grounds that children are too young may well imply that some children will either not consider these issues at all or will consider them in a different forum which may not be designed with appropriate constraints.

In short, the parts of children's education which deal with ethical and theological issues should aim to create a robust debate between children and qualified moderators. This debate is robust in the sense that I reject the two usual reasons to limit the scope of debate. These are children's age and hence innocence or vulnerability, and objections made by parents to the content of the curriculum.

Justification

An intensive ethical education which teaches about a number of different philosophical and religious doctrines could be justified in a variety of different ways. Many liberals could see the value in these lessons for the civic purposes of education. By learning about the content of doctrines other than their own, children may become better prepared for life in a pluralistic society in which there will be many different perspectives on the questions facing the community. By understanding the viewpoints and perspectives of their fellow citizens, children may thus be better prepared to act as reasonable citizens. However, this civic value cannot alone be sufficient to justify this kind of education when it encounters parental complaints. As I showed in chapter five when considering Eamonn Callan's rendering of the convergence thesis, children are able to become politically reasonable citizens without fully understanding the views of others. They must simply appreciate that others hold different views from theirs and that these different view should not affect the political status of those who hold them.

Another possible way of justifying this kind of intense scrutiny of doctrines is in preparing children to make choices about which comprehensive doctrine they feel makes best sense for them. This approach is adopted by Harry Brighouse, who argues that a central goal of teaching children about a variety of different

doctrines is that they will be better prepared to make a choice for themselves about which way of life suits them. I discussed the example he uses to illustrate these kinds of choices in chapter two. This example is one of a homosexual child growing up in a conservative community in America (Brighthouse, 2006: 17). As discussed then, Brighthouse believes that while the lifestyle pursued in this community may be a valuable one, it is not one a homosexual can endorse from the inside. As such, an important role for education is in giving children like this an opportunity to choose a different way of life, hopefully one which is better suited to their nature and inclinations. His argument for teaching different doctrines is thus a version of the instrumental argument that I considered in chapter two of the thesis. As I argued then, the view that there are many different ways in which individuals can flourish, the theory of value pluralism, is antithetical to many comprehensive doctrines.

By contrast, on my account the value of children learning about the attractions of other doctrines and thinking through ethical dilemmas is that it gives them the resources to understand and critically analyse the beliefs that they learn in the home and elsewhere. Children must come to understand that the views held, and taught, by their parents are not the only possible ones, and they must see the implications of the views they learn in the home when compared to those of other possible doctrines. However, the goal is not to push children away from their parent's views, or even necessarily to lessen the influence of parents over their children, but to ensure that the views that children come to hold have been subjected to critical scrutiny.

This policy will obviously be controversial. It will, for instance, imply that children will have to go to school longer than was wished by the parents in Yoder, and that they will be exposed to precisely the sort of reading material that was the source of the complaint in Mozert. The kind of education I am proposing is therefore likely to be less acceptable to some citizens than the purely civic education Rawls proposes. This is a serious issue; one of the chief advantages of political liberalism is that it is more hospitable to the diversity found in modern society. When the state overrules parental objections it is liable to reduce the amount of support it

has from within important sections of community, and to undercut the attraction of liberal institutions to certain religious communities. Nevertheless, parental objections cannot alone constitute a sufficient reason to reject this policy. Undue deference to parental choices in upbringing is at the core of problem that I have argued arises from the political liberal model as it is currently understood, since it runs the risk of parents passing on beliefs which are not in their children's best interests.

Thus, while designing an education policy that is acceptable to parents is an important goal, it is not the paramount one. Instead the ongoing argument throughout the thesis has established two criteria to test any scheme of education. The first is whether the given policy fairly responds to children's interests in education. As I argued in section three, a purely civic education will illegitimately ignore children's concerns. In this instance we must therefore ask whether promoting children's skills of critical reasoning will be beneficial to them. The second criteria of a justifiable curriculum is whether it illegitimately promotes one contested view of ethics or the good. While we must fairly respond to children's interests in education, we must not do this by breaking the commitment to neutrality which formed the bedrock of a just response to the fact of reasonable pluralism. I will now argue that an advanced ethical education is both beneficial to children, and that it can be justified in terms of public reason.

The value of debate and scrutiny

There are two main ways in which an extended ethical education will be valuable for those children who undergo it. The first is that it will make the children's developing comprehensive views more coherent. The second is that it will help them to understand the consequences of their view for their plans of life, and enable them to think carefully about whether the view is one to which they wish to adhere.

Especially in a lively pluralistic society, children are highly likely to come to hold a set of beliefs that are somewhat incoherent or not well considered. This is true even where children are inducted into a relatively coherent comprehensive

doctrine by their parents. While such views, particularly religious views, may have applications to a wide variety of different situations they do not exhaust the set of beliefs and opinions a citizen might have. In addition to whatever philosophical or religious commitments children may come to have, they will thus also have opinions on a whole variety of ethical, political and aesthetic questions. Explaining how each child comes to hold their views will obviously be an incredibly complicated task, and one well beyond the purview of this analysis. It seems reasonable to suggest that for many children the views of their parents will be important, either through the children following, or forcefully rejecting, them. In most cases a child's education will also play a role, both through the content of lessons and by offering a chance to meet other children with different beliefs.

Understanding the interplay between these different influences is a question well beyond this thesis. The important point for my analysis is that in the vast majority of cases a child's views are the product of a plethora of different influences. Further, these different influences will often come from different perspectives and thus guide children towards attitudes or beliefs that may be in tension with one another. We should thus expect children to hold a number of views some of which are contradictory. Even when their views are not incoherent, we would expect children to face difficult situations in working out how each element of their beliefs fits with the others.

In such a context, the first important contribution that a robust ethical education can make to children's lives is to provide them with a forum to think through their opinions and discover the elements of their world view which conflict with another. Thinking about difficult cases may force children to see areas in which different parts of their world view conflict with one another, and therefore to consider which elements of their world view are most important to them.

The second value of this kind of ethical education is to force children to think carefully about what the views and opinions learned at home really commit them to. They would face this challenge through lessons dealing with ethical dilemmas and political problems. In these lessons children would be asked to consider their

own responses to issues, but also learn about the responses of individuals who hold different comprehensive views from their own. Through this discussion, children will come to hold a better understanding of the way different religions or philosophical views deal with actual problems. This scrutiny gives them a genuine opportunity to reject elements of the views that they learn at home.

This possibility of children coming to reject elements of the views they learn at home is considered valuable in so far as individuals can meaningfully consider questions of the good and come to hold views which will serve them better in later life by weighing competing reasons. Of course, the suggestion that reflection and scrutiny leads to more justifiable views does not imply that reflection and argument are the only way to come to knowledge about the good. That is, my account does not rule citizens holding beliefs on the basis of faith or intuition. The aim is to try and avoid basing political principles on controversial claims about the nature of truth or the best way to come to knowledge of the good. Instead, my account rests on the much more modest claim that argument and deliberation with others is a useful way of clarifying the beliefs one holds, in seeing their implications and in rejecting elements of doctrines which one comes to find objectionable.

The paradigmatic case we imagine here is not one in which an individual renounces the entirety of their comprehensive doctrine when faced with critical scrutiny. We would not usually expect discussions in class to cause children to abandon entirely their beliefs or their allegiance to the traditions that they have learned in the home. Instead, the role of critical scrutiny is to assess which aspects of these traditions or belief systems children find compelling and which they find unpersuasive. Most reasonable comprehensive doctrines are complex and open to numerous interpretations; this is certainly true of all the examples considered by Rawls in *Political Liberalism*. Thus, even where a child is a committed Muslim or Christian, there is still important work to be done in showing how the different beliefs they learnt at home fit together, and how they cohere with other opinions the child may have.

The usual case will therefore be one in which children make rather modest alterations to the views they learn at home. In addition to these cases there will also be instances in which children radically alter their views, and abandon the beliefs taught to them at home or in the community. However, that this is a 'live' possibility is itself one of the advantages of kind of ethical education proposed here. The hope is that through a more detailed scrutiny of their beliefs children will come to reject views which are bizarre or poorly justified. To this end, it is worth noting that the easiest cases to show of children being badly influenced by the views of their parents often involve the children being cut off from contact with other individuals with different views. This is most obviously true in the extreme cases of cults that I considered earlier in the thesis. The supposition is that children may be willing to accept almost any set of beliefs if it is the only doctrine they encounter, but would reject it if shown alternatives.

Therefore, the defence of ethical education rests on two arguments. Ethical education is a useful device to enable children to come to a more coherent set of beliefs and values, which is especially valuable for children growing up in an, often confusing, pluralistic society. Further, by scrutinising the beliefs learned at home and by showing children alternative systems of thought, this kind of education opens up the genuine possibility of children rejecting the beliefs they learn in the home. This possibility of rejection acts as a filter, and mitigates against the danger of parents passing on bizarre or unjustified beliefs without children fully considering the implications and justifications of these doctrines.

While the arguments presented above are persuasive, they do not answer the crucial question for political liberals, which is whether a given policy or institution can be considered legitimate. This test of legitimacy can be considered in two separate but related ways. The first is whether this scheme of education promotes one contested conception of the good. Specifically, this is the charge that ethical education is designed to foster a distinctively liberal understanding of reasoning, an understanding of reasoning which is intimately linked with a sectarian liberal understanding of the good life. The second issue of legitimacy is whether reasonable citizens could reasonably object to this policy. I will now consider these

two separate problems of legitimacy in detail, and show that my account can meet both of these challenges. In both cases, I show that while a robust ethical education is definitely controversial, it is not sectarian in a way that would render it illegitimate.

Problems of legitimacy-promoting liberal values

The first possible problem with my argument in favour of ethical education I will deal with is that it rests on the assumption that citizens can reason and debate meaningfully about questions of the good. This is a possible problem because if we advance critical reasoning and debate as beneficial then we seem committed to the thought that the good is something about which we can reason and which careful consideration can reveal. As such, my account of the value of ethical education relies on judgements about the way to reach justifiable conclusions about ethical and theological questions. These are views about the nature of ethical questions with which citizens might disagree. One could think that views about ethics are acquired simply by faith in God, or one could think that ethical judgements should be driven purely by intuition or gut feeling.

The core objection here would be that my account relies on an overly liberal understanding of practical reasoning, and as such smuggles more comprehensive liberal values through the back door. Put differently, the charge is that the assumption that these ways of reaching knowledge are better than the alternatives is a view about epistemology which fits much better with a liberal secular world view than with more traditional or religious ones. Stated in these terms a dependence on rational reflection would seem to pose a serious challenge to the neutrality of the state, and thus imperil its legitimacy.

In response to this worry, it is important to note that there are two different senses in which a theory could promote liberal assumptions or liberal canons of reasoning. The first is if a state pursued liberal values as a comprehensive ordering

of values, and hence as an alternative way of living to other views found in society. If my account was liberal in this sense then it would indeed represent a failure of my thesis, since the guiding aim throughout has been to avoid a comprehensive liberal account of education. However, I will argue that a robust ethical education can be justified in a way that does not rest on liberal values in this sense; specifically, that the canons of reasoning it values are also valued across many different comprehensive views. For this reason, my account is able to avoid the objection that it rests on damagingly sectarian assumptions. The second sense of promoting liberal values is that this account of education rests on assumptions about the value of living together in a liberal way rather than under some alternative method of political organisation. While my account does indeed rest on liberal assumptions in this sense, this should not be a worrying conclusion for political liberals.

To show the differences between my account and more substantively liberal ones, consider the examples of comprehensive liberalism that I have considered in the thesis. One version would simply hold that autonomy is of great intrinsic value and is constitutive of the good life. On this view, the reason we ought to promote autonomy is because an individual cannot live a good life without being autonomous. The second, weaker, claim is that advanced by Joseph Raz that I considered in detail in chapter two. This is the claim that due to the existence of value pluralism, and the context of our society, individuals will usually be better off living autonomously than not. The problem with both of these varieties of comprehensive liberalism is that they fundamentally conflict with the tenets of widely held comprehensive doctrines. The notion that autonomy has intrinsic value conflicts with any theory which believes that value has a different source (such as utilitarian theories or spiritual notions of flourishing). As I showed when criticizing the Razian account of perfectionism this view is rendered objectionably sectarian because of its reliance on value pluralism.

The assumption that debate and scrutiny can lead individuals to better views differs significantly from these comprehensive theories. An acceptance of the value of this kind of scrutiny and debate is found within many different

comprehensive doctrines. Shelly Burt draws attention to the importance of this kind of study within numerous different religiously run schools of many faiths (Burt, 1994). Indeed, for much of western history the institutions of the church were amongst the foremost centres of debate and scholarship. As such, the assumption that debate is valuable is one which can be defended from within a wide variety of different doctrines and perspectives.¹⁷

Of course, to say that this kind of education is compatible with many different faiths and creeds is not to say that it is compatible with the sets of beliefs that are actually held in society. If it were, we would expect no objections to this level of debate and scrutiny and, of course, in actual societies there are many such objections. Accepting the ethical education I advocate would thus require a significant change in the beliefs of some members of society. While this is regrettable, it does not imply that the policy is illegitimate. Any plausible account of political liberalism will require comprehensive doctrines to alter in order to meet public standards. For example, many members of the religious right in America believe that their religious views should have direct relevance for political decisions in a way that contravenes the principles of public reason (and the Constitution). The mere fact that these citizens would have to change this view surely cannot imply that the principle of public reason should be rejected.

Instead, the defence of political liberalism is that believers do not have to abandon the core elements of their beliefs in order to embrace liberal institutions, although as I said above, some aspects of doctrines may need to change significantly. The reason we should reject an education designed to foster Kantian autonomy or Millian individuality is because these comprehensive varieties of liberalism are incompatible with other reasonable comprehensive views. Thus, consider Rawls' belief that a principle of free faith is compatible with each of the major religions

¹⁷ At this point, some would raise the suggestion that debate within sectarian institutions is significantly different from debate between individuals who hold fundamentally different beliefs. It is outside the purview of the thesis to rebut this critique fully, since my arguments are addressed to theorists who accept the broad acceptability of liberalism. It is worth mentioning here though that my arguments may show some problems with this line of thought, particularly the problems inherent in classifying individuals as belonging to any one 'tradition' in pluralistic societies like ours. The circumstances of pluralism imply that many individuals will hold beliefs and insights drawn from a number of doctrines. Moreover, even if we accept the possibility that deep deliberation within a comprehensive doctrine rather than between them is more fruitful, the existence of highly advanced scholarship within religious traditions rebuts the charge that an advanced education is inherently hostile to these viewpoints.

(Rawls, 1993: 170). The point of this argument cannot be that currently existing religious believers are committed to a principle of free faith. This argument would be contradicted by any number of different religious creeds which are much more hostile to liberal principles.

Instead, the claim is that believers of each of the major religions can become reconciled to liberalism without abandoning their beliefs. In a similar fashion, if making education fair means promoting scrutiny and debate then religions and creeds will have to adapt to this in order to be compatible with what liberalism requires. The point of raising Burt's comments, and the historical compatibility of religions and debate, is to show that even though some believers may have to adapt, they can do so without abandoning their core beliefs. In this way our defence of liberal education can avoid the dangerous charge of advancing a single sectarian view.

Avoiding sectarianism in this way means that my account does not promote overly liberal values in the sense that would undermine its claim to neutrality. Of course, this is not to say that my account of reasoning does not rest on assumptions that non-liberals might reject. As I alluded to at the outset, the correct response to the charge that a belief in debate is overly liberal is to argue that being overly 'liberal' is no bad thing when liberal is construed in a broad sense rather than a narrow sectarian one. Political liberalism is, rightly, opposed to a society in which only individuals who are Kantians or consequentialists can accept the reasoning given for the shape of their institutions. The drive to appeal to individuals who hold a plethora of different views defines the project.

However, this does not mean we should attempt to accommodate every position in society. After all, political liberalism is a liberal project and as such is an alternative set of institutions to non liberal solutions to pluralism. For instance, political liberals would oppose the dividing up of society into small enclaves, each dedicated to one specific comprehensive doctrine. Instead, the kind of society envisioned by political liberals is a democratic one, and is one in which individuals of different views will come together to deliberate about the matters that affect

them as a collective body. For this project to be successful, people who live in this society must come to see the value of their common institutions to them. Many of the most important liberal freedoms guaranteed by these common institutions only make sense in light of the value of some kind of debate and exchange of ideas. It should therefore be no surprise, and certainly does not constitute a reneging on the commitment to neutrality, for political liberals to defend these values.

Therefore, while my account does rely upon assumptions about the good, these assumptions do not undermine its legitimacy. Debate and critique are not simply elements of one sectarian view, but instead are valued by many different doctrines. While promoting debate amongst children, rather than leaving them in separate and divided enclaves, does indeed promote liberal values in a broader sense, this presents no problem. Political liberalism is at core a liberal doctrine, and therefore will have to defend distinctively liberal values against alternative responses to pluralism.

Problems of legitimacy -reasonable dissent

The second possible challenge to the legitimacy of my account is whether reasonable citizens could reasonably reject an education system designed to foster skills of criticism and debate. If such citizens exist, then again this account must be rejected as being illegitimate. Initially, we should note that there will almost certainly be reasonable citizens who would object to my proffered scheme of education. As I noted in chapter five, the standards of reasonableness are likely to be set by political rather than metaphysical criteria. On plausible assumptions there are likely to be many cases in which children come to reject the politically reasonable views of their parents because they find them to be metaphysically unreasonable. By contrast, such children may well have gone on to accept their parents' views given a purely civic model of education such as the one proposed by Rawls. Given this, these parents will object to the proposed education system, and their politically reasonable beliefs would imply that they should be considered as reasonable citizens.

Given that these are reasonable citizens, we must then ask whether the complaints they advance are themselves reasonable. If they are, then my account is illegitimate and despite whatever value it might have to children it should therefore be rejected. Fortunately, I believe there are good reasons to doubt the reasonableness of these objections. In particular, it is important to differentiate the account I am proposing from others offered in the literature. For instance, on the argument presented by Matthew Clayton parents cannot legitimately aim to pass on their values or theological beliefs to their children at all. In contrast, I argued that Clayton was wrong to think that the principle of legitimacy applied to parental conduct. Indeed I argued that parental authority over children was a direct consequence of the principle of legitimacy. As the state cannot promote an alternative comprehensive doctrine it cannot have a good reason to oppose parents' wishes, unless these violate children's basic rights or will compromise the ability of children to act as reasonable citizens. Since my account endorses the principle of legitimacy this conclusion is still valid. Parents will still be able to pass on whatever beliefs they wish in the home, and they will still be able to send their children to other institutions such as a church or Sunday school.

Therefore, on my account parents will still be given significant scope to choose the style and content of their children's upbringing. The caveat is that their children will learn about other belief systems when at school. Given the fact that parents will still control both the environment of the home and other important aspects of upbringing, it does not seem compelling to think that they have insufficient influence or connection with their child's development.

If the parents do still object then it can only be to the mere fact that their children learn seriously about other beliefs. At this point it does not seem to violate the spirit of political liberalism to oppose parental wishes. The intuitive appeal of political liberalism rests on accepting the fact of reasonable pluralism, liberals must accept that citizens will disagree about matters of the good and not all will come to see autonomy or individuality as the correct guiding ideals for human life. This disagreement arises from the burdens of judgment which together imply that reasonable individuals will persistently disagree about the most profound

questions in life. Political liberals explicitly differentiate these sources of reasonable disagreement from others, such as doctrines being maintained by manipulation or wilful error. If a doctrine or viewpoint can only survive because children learn it exclusively in the home and never scrutinise either the reasons given for this view or the implications it might have, then it seems plausible to suggest that curtailing it (as my scheme of education would do) does not fail to respect the fact of reasonable pluralism. Maintaining a view simply by excluding children from knowing about alternatives can be compared to other unreasonable ways of perpetuating beliefs, such as restricting the freedom of speech of rival views.

Thus, while I reach similar conclusions to other writers, my account rests on a different understanding of the reasons we ought to block parental wishes than the views held in much of the existing literature. Consider again the cases of Mozert and Yoder. Perfectionist liberals would object that the parents in these cases are denying their children autonomy, and that this is bad for children because autonomy is an essential element of living well, at least in societies like ours. I rejected this view because the assumption that autonomy was constitutive of the good life conflicted with many reasonable views about the good life. The proponents of the instrumental argument believed that what the parents in Yoder had done wrong was deny their children the opportunity to follow valuable ways of life different from their own, an argument that could only be sustained via the problematic assumption that these other ways of life were actually valuable. In contrast, on my account the parents' claims are rejected because they are trying to force their views illegitimately onto another member of society. We can object to individuals imposing their views on others without making any assessment about the relative merits of the value of each way of life. As such, this argument is consistent with the principle of legitimacy in the way the others are not.

Empirical education

An education which encourages discussion about ethical matters from a wide variety of perspectives is thus desirable, in that it is more likely to generate views which are plausible and consistent, and is legitimate since it does not privilege a single comprehensive doctrine. As such, this kind of class will form an important part of the curriculum of a properly justified political liberal society.

However, given practical constraints and important ethical concerns, debate and discussion cannot constitute the entirety of the curriculum. While no hard and fast line exists in reality, in schools practical concerns mean that we must distinguish between those areas of schooling which deal with ethical and cultural matters and those that depend upon children learning a set of empirical facts. Good examples of the latter are subjects such as science and parts of history. Of course, this is not to say that either history or science class should simply be learning a series of facts by rote. Historical analysis admits of many different interpretations. As such, it would be inappropriate for teachers to simply lecture students about the correct way to view historical events. Moreover, debate and discussion are valuable ways to help students learn and should therefore be encouraged in these classes.

All I am drawing attention to is thus that education in subjects like history or science will not get off the ground unless the teacher also has a role in passing on a series of facts; we cannot simply let children debate amongst themselves about how best to explain natural phenomena. As well as these practical concerns, there are strong ethical reasons to teach children how to think scientifically and historically. Used properly, children can learn about how to assess the evidence for a particular account of events, and understand the reasoning that has allowed modern technological progress. Understanding at least the basics of how these aspects of world work and having some knowledge of the course of human history are profoundly important in coming to understand one's place in the world and how best to respond to it.

On the face of it, teaching a core set of empirical facts would not pose a problem for political liberalism. As I have discussed, the goal of this theory is to remain neutral between comprehensive philosophical and theological disputes. Political

liberal neutrality thus does not obviously extend to empirical disagreements. Indeed, Rawls seems to imply that reasonable disagreement should be expected only over matters of the good rather than scientific or historical questions. For instance Rawls writes that: 'Why does not our conscientious attempt to reason with one another lead to reasonable agreement? It seems to do so in natural science, at least in the long run' (Rawls, 1993: 55).

The problem is that many of the most pressing issues facing education are caused precisely because citizens do in fact disagree over questions which are at least partly empirical. Perhaps the most obvious example of this, particularly in the United States, is that of the place of religious doctrines within science classes, and specifically whether schools should exclusively teach Darwin's theory of evolution or include instruction in some religiously motivated alternatives. I will use this case as an example to highlight the problem for political liberalism as defended by Rawls when considering subjects like science, and to show how my account can better deal with both this case and wider empirical disputes.

Intelligent design

Teaching the theory of evolution has been a particularly significant flashpoint because of its fundamental importance to both secular individuals, who view it as one of the most important scientific theories of recent centuries, and certain sections of the Christian community, who view Darwinian theory as antithetical to their most fundamental beliefs about God's role in creation and man's place within the world. In the US case, during the early decades of the Twentieth Century the Christian view was often legally enforced. Most famously, this includes the verdict of the Scopes trial, in which the courts ruled that it was permissible for the state of Tennessee to prohibiting the teaching of evolution in public classrooms. However, in recent decades legal opinion has shifted in favour of those in favour of teaching evolution. In 1968 in the case of *Epperson vs Arkansas* the Supreme Court ruled that prohibited teaching evolution was unconstitutional. The response of some states was to introduce laws stating that the teaching of evolution had to be partnered with an education covering creationism. These laws were also attacked by liberals in the court, culminating in

the 1987 case of *Edwards vs Aguillard*. The case dealt with a law in Louisiana which required that creation science be taught in public schools alongside the theory of evolution. The court eventually ruled that this law was unconstitutional, since creationism was premised on a religious doctrine and therefore its teaching would breach the establishment clause forbidding the state from establishing an official religion.

Following this, and other important Supreme Court decisions, public schools in the US cannot teach explicitly religious doctrines as 'science'. However, opponents of evolution have put forward a new theory termed 'intelligent design', which is offered as a permissible alternative to Darwin's theory. This theory differs from creationism in that it is, purportedly, neutral about the nature of the creator of the universe. All that this theory posits is that the theory of evolution is insufficient to explain all of the variety of life in the universe and that instead elements of life point to a designer. Supporters of this theory believe that it meets the criterion of being a scientific one, and is therefore constitutional. Opponents argue that this is a sham, and that in fact religious believers are merely disguising their beliefs in order to get them into the classroom.

Therefore, if we accept at face value the claims of the proponents of intelligent design these empirical questions constitute the entirety of the disagreement. These theorists merely claim that natural selection cannot explain all the variety of life which exists on planet Earth and that therefore a more plausible explanation is that an intelligent entity played a role in life's development. If this is indeed the totality of their claim, then this disagreement is clearly an empirical matter similar to debates between theorists who believe the universe was created in a big bang and those who believe it has always existed in its present state. Even if we think that in fact the proponents of intelligent design are attempting to push a religiously motivated agenda, there is still an important empirical disagreement between the two groups rather than simply a disagreement over questions of the good or theology.

This case thus reminds us that while perpetual disagreement may be a peculiar aspect of debates about the good, our societies in fact disagree about a whole variety of empirical matters as well. Beyond the debate over intelligent design, our societies disagree over many different empirical questions, an obvious current example of this is the issue of whether man made actions are responsible for global warming. While Rawls may be right to argue that in the long run citizens will come to agree on scientific questions, though we cannot take this for granted, there is still a problem about how to respond to the empirical disagreement we find in society as it is now.

At this point, political liberals might make a number of possible arguments in order to differentiate empirical disagreement from disagreements between competing comprehensive conceptions of the good. They might argue that empirical questions are publicly solvable in a way that matters of the good are not. Given publicly recognised standards of reasoning, we can leave empirical questions in the hands of relevant experts and accept their conclusions, whereas no such experts exist over matters of the good. In addition, we might argue that empirical questions are less fundamental than matters of the good. While a conception of the good might form the core of one's being a scientific theory will usually have a less significant status. As such, the fact that the state acts in accordance with empirical views different to one's own is not illegitimate in the way that state actions which contravene a conception of the good are. This is a view suggested by Harry Brighouse, who believes that while there is an intimate connection between an individual's identity and their ethical or spiritual beliefs 'the same intimacy is not present in the case of empirical beliefs. While significant revision of our moral beliefs supports revision of our identities, this is not true of our empirical beliefs, especially abstract beliefs such as epistemological beliefs' (Brighouse, 1998, 738).

Unfortunately, neither of these responses is fully convincing when we consider the teaching of evolution. This is because the empirical disagreements in question are often inseparable from deeper questions of the good. Creationists' empirical beliefs about the process of the creation of life are a direct result of their conception of the good, which states that God exists and was the creator of man

and the universe. Thus we cannot argue that the state acting in a way that contravenes a citizen's empirical beliefs is necessarily less significant than contravening their conception of the good, since in this case to deny a creationist's empirical beliefs simply is to deny an important aspect of his beliefs about the good.

This interaction between comprehensive doctrines and more immediate empirical questions presents a real problem for political liberalism and the concept of liberal neutrality more generally. It seems to suggest that the political liberal state cannot use education to advance one single view of scientific or historical truth, for the same reasons that we cannot use education to advance one comprehensive conception of the good.

Indeed, this interpretation of the implications of liberal neutrality is suggested by Thomas Nagel. Nagel argues that if a state aims to remain neutral between the competing comprehensive doctrines in society then it must allow intelligent design to form a legitimate part of school curriculum. His reasoning for this follows directly from the close connection between these scientific theories and wider views of the good. He writes, 'I believe that if a state legislature or school board voted to prohibit discussion of ID in the classroom, that would contravene the requirement of religious neutrality, although not as obviously as the exclusion of the theory of evolution, because it would depend upon a view, atheism or theistic non-determinism, that clearly falls into the domain of religious belief' (Nagel, 2008: 15).

The problem with this line of thinking is that it is unclear how Nagel can restrict the scope of his argument in the way that he believes. Nagel argues that intelligent design is a plausible theory if one begins with the appropriate religious conviction but believes that the more extreme view of creationism, which holds that God created the world in seven days, is ruled out by the evidence. However, it is difficult to see how Nagel can make the distinction between intelligent design and creationism in the way required. Just as it may be sensible to believe in intelligent design given certain theological assumptions, so there are other

theological beliefs which make it rational to believe in creationism or other doctrines which would be rejected by most scientists. For instance, we could hold the belief that God exists and is an omnipotent being and that the Bible is a literal account of His word. If we take seriously these two assumptions it seems difficult to see what empirical evidence could possibly be offered to contradict the view that God created the world in seven days. After all, any seemingly contradictory evidence could be explained as part of God's plan. Similar reasoning can presumably be offered for any number of other accounts which conflict with scientific orthodoxy.

Therefore, the principle of neutrality seems to require far more than allowing the teaching of intelligent design. Instead, this view seems to require giving equal weight to a large number of religiously motivated accounts of creation in order to avoid privileging the scientific world view. However, this move would encounter two serious problems. Firstly, it does not seem plausible for the liberal state, or indeed any state, to give all of these different empirical views equal standing. There are after all a vast variety of different beliefs held in pluralistic society, many of which have empirical connotations. Teaching all of them in class seems implausible.

More significantly, teaching a wide variety of different accounts of the world as equally valid alternatives is unfair to children. There are powerful reasons to think that many of the empirical beliefs held in society are disproved by the evidence, and accepting that people can reasonably disagree over philosophical and theological matters should not obscure this fact. Exploring the science behind the debate between intelligent design and the theory of evolution is beyond the scope of this thesis (and the competence of the author). Nevertheless, I am persuaded by refutations of the reasoning behind intelligent design put forward by theorists such as Sober (2007) and Kitcher (1993). Note, though, that my wider argument does not depend on the efficacy of these accounts. Even if it were true that there are plausible reasons to believe in intelligent design, there would still surely be any number of other religiously or ethically motivated accounts of reality which are implausible. The general point is that unless there is a way to justify a scientific

curriculum despite the fact that it conflicts with some parental beliefs then a political liberal education seems doomed to be vacuous or non-existent.

The case of intelligent design and the existence of empirical disagreement more generally, thus show why the goal of remaining entirely freestanding with regards to different competing comprehensive doctrines is a misguided one, particularly in education. Many citizens hold beliefs, drawn directly from their comprehensive doctrines, which are radically different from those accepted by scientific orthodoxy. Designing a school curriculum which attempted to be neutral between all of these views is both practically difficult and unfair to children.

Compatibility

In addition to showing problems with the goal of remaining freestanding, the case of intelligent design also suggests that the goal of compatibility which I developed earlier may be a more attainable one. Instead of aiming to craft a curriculum that does not violate any comprehensive beliefs, we should instead aim to create a curriculum which can fit in with a broad variety of different ethical and theological beliefs. This goal offers strong reasons to pursue a scientific education based on the consensus of scientific experts, with the proviso that teachers must not push any broader account of the deeper meaning of science lessons, and make clear that any number of different accounts of spirituality can be held while still accepting the validity of the scientific method in settling some questions.

While it does not follow logically from the goal of compatibility to the presumption that schools will teach a secular science curriculum, the range of different religious doctrines held in society means that only a curriculum free of any religious tenets can plausibly meet this goal. It seems obviously incompatible with atheist beliefs also to hold that an omnipotent being played a role in the creation of life. Moreover, different religious accounts of the origins of life or the universe are themselves in conflict. Of course, one could object that just as a belief in a creator is incompatible with atheism, so a belief in the evolution or the big bang is incompatible with religious doctrines. If this was the case, then it would follow that no science curriculum could meet the criteria of compatibility.

Fortunately, a compelling rebuttal to this challenge is suggested by Warnick and Focce. They argue that current understandings of religious texts - in particular, the Bible - are based on a faulty method of interpretation. The modern reading of texts seems to suggest that religious texts present an actual account of events and are therefore contradictory to scientific understandings. However, a deeper understanding of the historical context of religious texts suggests that they should not be seen in this way. On the modernist view 'Genesis is taken to be an accurate description of an independent event' and 'this modernist reading of Genesis is what compels some believers to see it as an alternative to evolution.' (Warnick and Focce, 2007: 366). They argue though that this reading is inappropriate since sacred texts were written according to premodern standards. They then argue that, 'Premoderns understood sacred texts not so much as something which refers to the sacred, but something which incarnates or enacts the sacred' (Warnick and Focce, 2007: 365). On this model sacred texts are taken to be more analogous to poetry than science text books, and are attempts to capture the significance and emotions of events rather than to depict exactly how they occurred in the physical world.

The case of intelligent design thus highlights the way in which the 'compatibility approach' will operate more generally, and shows its attractions. Attempting to remain neutral between all existing comprehensive doctrines seems to have significant, and unpalatable, consequences for the teaching of facts and evidence in schools. Many comprehensive doctrines will have implications for empirical matters as well as matters of the good. Refusing to take a position on any of these matters will leave the state's curriculum as vacuous, and cede the teaching of these important questions entirely to parents or private organisations, whose views may be incoherent or unjustified.

Instead of avoiding a position on these questions, the goal of state education should be to teach a set of facts which leaves open the more fundamental questions of ethics and theology. In this way, the state does not advance one single comprehensive doctrine over the rest. Moreover, the fact of pluralism does not imply that we can hold no justified knowledge about empirical matters, even

though they are sometimes open to disagreement. Where there is good reason to hold one set of beliefs, teaching them to children is an important part of creating the right conditions for them to come to their own beliefs and values.

Conclusion

Taken together, these two schemes of education – the ethical and the empirical – cover the different sides of the syllabus. For those questions concerning ethical matters I have advocated debate with the teacher (or better, committed guest speaker) acting as moderator. For other subjects the teacher should advocate those facts which relevant experts believe to be true, but stress that the account learned in science or history is consistent with a wide variety of different ethical and philosophical perspectives (even if not with all, or with the particular interpretation of the ethical perspective endorsed by their parents).

The guiding purpose behind both of these elements is to create a learning environment which is conducive to children coming to hold more justifiable comprehensive doctrines. So, I emphasised ethical debate and scrutiny on the assumption that it might lead children to come to more coherent views about the ethics and philosophy, and to reject views which are incoherent or implausible. Likewise, I argued that children needed an introductory education in science and history in order properly to understand their world and the different philosophical or religious ways of viewing it.

This goal differs significantly from the merely civic role that Rawls envisions for education. My account is justified by reference to its value to the children themselves, not to maintaining the stability of liberal institutions. Moreover, in so doing it takes a position on issues which political liberals might wish to side step. I argued that the state should consider debate and scrutiny to be valuable in coming to justified conclusions about ethics and theology and further that the state should teach as true certain historical or scientific facts which might conflict with the deeply held beliefs of some members of society.

While this policy would doubtless be controversial, I have argued that it need not contravene the principle of legitimacy. Specifically, when defending both aspects of my account, I argued that a liberal education should be compatible with each of the different reasonable comprehensive doctrines found in society. So, when defending a robust debate in class about ethical issues, I noted that debate and criticism were emphasised in many religious traditions and formed part of the curriculum in many religiously run institutions. Likewise, when defending a science curriculum which teaches Darwinian evolution rather than creationism, I argued that a modest defence of the scientific method, which remained silent on deeper questions, was compatible with a wide variety of different ethical and philosophical beliefs.

This goal of compatibility is significantly different from that of remaining entirely freestanding from ethical and philosophical disputes. This chapter has aimed to show its advantages in the case of education. Firstly, the goal of remaining entirely freestanding from ethical disputes seems difficult to maintain given the close connections between an individual's philosophical and religious convictions and their empirical beliefs. As I showed when I considered Nagel's arguments, remaining neutral between all of these different beliefs would render the science curriculum hopelessly incoherent. More importantly, the goal of compatibility is fairer to children than that of being freestanding. Remaining freestanding implies that the state take no position on issues such as the teaching of evolution. This implies that the state cannot guide children between the many different and incompatible views found in society. Thus, either some other actor will act as a guide, possible to the detriment of children, or children will have to come to an understanding on their own. By contrast, my account still leaves sufficient space for a wide variety of different views and creeds to flourish, but also aims to ensure that children have the training and appropriate grounding to assess different empirical or ethical theories.

Thus, the arguments of this chapter go some way to meeting the challenge of legitimacy that arises once we admit that policies and institutions must be justifiable to children. The chief problem faced by a purely civic model was that

parents could pass on almost any set of beliefs to their children, even if these beliefs were implausible or pernicious. The broad response to this challenge was that a political liberal education should give children the skills to evaluate and critique the beliefs endorsed by their parents or communities. In doing so the state can at least respond to a child who later objects to the beliefs that she holds that she had some opportunity to consider the implications of her views and that she had available to her knowledge of alternative perspectives on life.

Chapter 9-Flourishing in a Liberal Society

The previous chapter considered how children come to acquire their comprehensive doctrines. I argued that merely letting parents pass on whatever beliefs they wished was illegitimate, and that instead children must learn about a number of different views as well as having instruction in some basic features of science and history. While parents should be allowed to pass on beliefs to their children this does not imply that they ought to have the right to limit their children's ability to question and scrutinise these doctrines. The aim of education should be to ensure that all children have the ability to think critically about what they learn in the home and from their communities. In so doing, education acts as a barrier against the inculcation of bizarre or misguided views, which we hope are less likely to survive rational scrutiny. The reason this change was required was so that it could mitigate the problem of legitimacy which beset a purely civic account of education. A purely civic account was subject to future reasonable rejection by children, since it did not consider their interests in the development of their comprehensive beliefs.

However, while my account of education can meet this challenge of legitimacy, it might do so at the cost of creating another. Specifically, in pushing children to consider carefully the opinions and beliefs they learn at home, a liberal education will inevitably foster skills of self reflection and criticism which will have an impact on many different aspects of their lives. Indeed, returning to the argument of chapter five, the convergence between my account and attempts to use education to foster autonomy will be far greater than was the case for Rawls' civically minded account of the role of education. Although note that even on my view

there is not a full convergence since my account simply calls for children to have an adequate level of critical skills rather than demanding that such skills be continually promoted.

The possible problem here is that in a pluralistic society, many individuals will have an account of non-political values which do not prioritise autonomy, or indeed, have belief systems in which certain kinds of personal autonomy are seen as deeply detrimental. It would be a serious problem if an education which fosters skills of critique and reflection thus precludes, or profoundly impairs, the ability to live in accordance with some reasonable doctrines. Citizens who wish to live in accordance with ways of life inimical to these skills could object to the education they received as a child. As such, my account would suffer from a similar problem, although manifested in different ways, to that which afflicts a purely civic model of education.

Matthew Clayton considers this case by imagining a religious believer who thinks that revising her attitude to her faith would be catastrophic, and thus that it is unthinkable for her to alter their deepest beliefs. He writes that:

‘Rawls draws a distinction between an individual’s public or institutional identity and her moral, or non-institutional, identity. In the former sense, as a citizen, an individual can accept she has an interest in developing and exercising her capacity for a conception of the good, which motivates her concern for the liberal rights that support that capacity. However, in her non-institutional life, as a member of a church, she may hold a different view.... As a citizen, she will favour the freedoms of religion, association and expression; as a member of a church, she may take steps to ensure that she does not step back from, and reflect on, the value of her deepest religious commitments’ (Clayton, 2006,134).

The challenge is thus that, for some individuals, the kind of education I am promoting will seem useless or perhaps even dangerous. Since on any plausible notion of political liberalism individuals will be free to adopt such beliefs,

examples such as this pose a serious challenge. These religious individuals can legitimately complain that the education system did not furnish them with skills that were useful to their plan of life – indeed, instead it supplied them with character traits that make adhering to their life choices more difficult – and thus did not take into account their interests.

My response to this challenge is to show how the usefulness of a limited notion of autonomy and self reflection arises out of deep seated aspects of our society and human interaction more generally, and is thus not merely valuable to those who hold a conception of the good which emphasises autonomy. I do this by outlining three different ways in which these skills might be useful to individuals in a society like ours. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, nor do any of them hold as a matter of logic. That is, there may well be cases for each in which we can imagine individuals to whom the argument does not apply. The hope, though, is that taken together we can offer a plausible set of reasons why even devout religious believers might gain, by their own lights, from the education I propose.

The role of a comprehensive doctrine within a life

The first advantage afforded by limited autonomy is in aiding individuals to form their own plan of life and to relate this to their comprehensive beliefs. To explain this, we must distinguish the notion of plan of life from the more specific notion of a comprehensive view. To show this distinction, consider again the examples that Rawls gives as exemplars of comprehensive doctrines. These are the major religions, and ethical theories such as Kantianism or utilitarianism. These doctrines are expansive, and have applications to a wide variety of cases. In this way, these doctrines provide reference points which are clearly vital in designing a rational plan of life. However, neither the major religions nor Kantianism constitute a plan of life in and of themselves.

Indeed, it is only in a relatively few decisions that a citizen's fundamental ethical or spiritual beliefs might determine their course of action. This would be the case if one choice was either required, or alternatively prohibited, by their ethical or religious beliefs. So, for instance, the decision about whether to enlist in the army

when one's country goes to war would be a difficult and complex one for many citizens, but might be determined if that citizens adhered to a pacifist faith such as Quakerism. However, even in these, relatively rare, cases in which a decision seems determined entirely by one's comprehensive conception, it will often be far from obvious precisely how to interpret the tenets of this doctrine. So, returning to the previous example, many pacifistic religious doctrines might allow exceptions in the case of self defence or other extreme circumstances.

The central role for a limited amount of autonomy in forming a plan of life is even clearer when we consider individuals who hold the ethical or philosophical doctrines which are given as examples of comprehensive doctrines. Virtually any plausible ethical theory will require serious consideration on the part of the agent about how to apply these abstract principles to real world cases. For instance, a citizen totally committed to utilitarianism would still need to reflect on how best to maximise utility in any given circumstance. Likewise, the application of Kantian philosophical principles is far from clear in many cases.

My own comprehensive view of the world includes a feeling that animals are worthy of much greater respect than they currently receive. As such, I am a vegetarian and in not eating meat I believe that I am aligning my life with important principles that I hold. However, I am not a vegan, and have dithered continually over the issue of whether to eat eggs. Even in this rather limited example, then, the application of my comprehensive principles requires precisely those skills of reflection and reasoning which would be the goal of the liberal education described by Brighouse and others.

Therefore, it would be an extremely rare case, indeed almost unimaginable, if the practical requirements of one's comprehensive view were neatly set out and did not require any deliberation or reflection on the part of the agent. By far the more usual case, in both religious and secular spheres, is that individuals will hold to a number of core beliefs and principles but will use their own judgement to decide how these come to bear on the situations we face in daily life. This is most obvious if we consider how most believers apply religious scripture to their lives, but we

also see a reliance on reflection in a whole variety of cases. This role for some degree of autonomy arises directly out of the circumstances of life in pluralistic societies. In such a world, citizens will face a wide array of choices and options about how to live their lives. Even relatively asocial existences are lived in these circumstances, and constitute a conscious, and therefore at least in part a chosen, rejection of these possible choices. Further, the constantly changing circumstances of modern life present ethical challenges which are both complex and nuanced.

While abstract principles provide guides to living in this world, none will provide a clear and easy to follow list of actions to cover every conceivable circumstance. Instead, coherently applying our deepest ethical and religious beliefs will require coming to understand the circumstances of our society and the ways we are allowed to act in it. Teaching children about their society, and talking through some of the choices they will be faced with, is not merely a way of promoting one sectarian way of living, but rather inculcates skills which will be useful to children who live in a community together with individuals with profoundly different beliefs.

Partially comprehensive conceptions of the good

The second factor that I will discuss that shows the value of autonomy to adherents of many different doctrines is most views people hold about the world are only partially comprehensive. Rawls defines a doctrine as more or less comprehensive depending on the number of different cases on which it has a bearing. A fully comprehensive view would order the relevant values of social and personal life into a coherent whole, and as such provide a guide to judgement in all cases. A partially comprehensive conception will cover some of the possible values and situations in life but will be silent on others (Rawls, 1993: 13).

Put in these terms, we must surely classify most of the doctrines that are held in society as partially rather than fully comprehensive, although of course some are much more comprehensive than others. Very few creeds or belief systems order all of the relevant values which bear on our lives. Indeed, it seems almost unimaginable to think of a single coherent view of the world which fully answered

all possible questions and was applicable to all of the decisions we faced in life. Even religious doctrines, which we might tend to think of as relatively comprehensive, will leave wide scope in many areas of life for individual choice and deliberation. Further, many religious believers will accept many, but not all, of their religions tenets.

Given these considerations, there is significant space between even a relatively comprehensive doctrine and a worked out plan of life. For instance, in order to have a fully worked out plan of life we would need to have a view on whether we would be better off being a high paid but hard working executive, an artist, or a devoted family man. It would seem deeply strange to think that this question was directly and simply answered simply by us being a Muslim or a Christian, or for that matter, a Kantian.

Of course, faced with some issue or question, we would likely scrutinize our choices in the light of the ethical content of the theory to which we adhere, and as such they will be a powerful guiding force within our lives, but fully working out such decisions will involve consideration of a whole host of other matters. When deeply religious persons consider significant decisions, they will naturally consider what to do from the perspective of their spiritual beliefs. In the vast majority of cases, these spiritual and ethical beliefs will provide guidance, but leave open a wide variety of choices. The obvious example here might be the choice of partner. It might be that for devout believers it is important that their partner shares their religious commitments. Such a belief would be an important factor to consider when choosing a mate, but would be far from the only relevant factor.

The importance of remembering the complex and diverse nature of citizen's beliefs is reinforced by the fact that most individuals will hold elements of numerous comprehensive doctrines. The noted conservative commentator Ross Douthat draws attention to this phenomenon within the Christian community of the United States. He quotes a pew research study which notes that even avowedly evangelical Christians hold beliefs about the 'spiritual energy' of trees

and mountains; beliefs which are not part of recognised Christian orthodoxy (Douthat, 2009).

Individual's religious beliefs are often not an ideologically pure version of any one of the major faiths, but contain elements of many different belief systems in a more or less coherent whole. Further, it is wrong to think that various religious commitments are incompatible with the philosophical doctrines that are counted amongst the comprehensive views. So, a citizen could quite coherently be a devout follower of a major religion, and also believe that some other important ethical decisions ought to be settled by a utilitarian calculus. So, a practicing Muslim or Jew might believe that the reason one ought not to eat pork or shellfish was due to divine commandment, but this does not commit them to thinking that divine commandment is the only way to come to moral conclusions. Likewise, one could be a vegetarian and a Christian, or a Muslim and a pacifist.

Where individuals hold elements and insights from a variety of different perspectives and doctrines, they will often have to use their own intuitions and judgement to reconcile these influences into their own rational plan of life. In so far as this is the case, we once again see a place for the skills of reflection and reasoning even for those people who do not endorse a view that commends personal autonomy as constitutive of the good life.

The fact that most doctrines are only partially comprehensive, and that therefore we can often hold insights from multiple doctrines, is an important consideration for thinking about how citizens can live well in a liberal society. It reminds us that we should not treat citizens as merely ciphers of a single comprehensive doctrine, but instead as having their own unique view point which is informed but not determined by their philosophical and religious commitments. A citizen's ethical and religious views do not, by any means constitute the whole of their lives, and many mundane choices and projects can be aided by the kind of skills that a liberal education might promote. This is vitally important since the test of legitimacy is whether a given policy can be justified to citizens, the question of whether a given set of institutions accords with the tenets of different comprehensive doctrines is

an important, but ultimately secondary, issue. This means that if actual citizens can see the value of the skills education provides, this education will be justifiable, even if these skills do not form a prominent place in many widely held abstract religious or philosophical theories.

Acquiring primary goods

The final consideration to which I will draw attention is the usefulness of a liberal education in securing the resources by which to pursue one's comprehensive doctrine. Paradigmatically here we would think of the usefulness of an advanced education, which may as a by product promote limited autonomy, in securing financial gain and access to a wider range of career options. Such resources might be intrinsically important to one's plan of life. That is, for many gaining a specific job will be important, or a citizen could quite legitimately simply want to become an affluent member of society. Even for citizens who do not desire such ends, money and employment will be instrumentally useful towards many ends. Moreover, having marketable skills and thus being able to live an independent existence with real control over career choices is in itself an important source of self respect for many individuals.

Given the institutions which are imagined by political liberals, and some plausible assumptions about the likely changes in the economic system in coming decades, some form of education is very likely to be useful in securing these material resources. In Rawlsian terms, the ability to participate effectively in the market place is vital in securing adequate primary goods. Primary goods are defined as those things which 'things that every rational man is assumed to want. These goods normally have a use whatever a person's rational plan of life. For simplicity, assume that the chief primary goods at the disposition of society are rights and liberties, powers and opportunities, income and wealth (Rawls, 1971: 62). In short, they are the things that almost any plausible plan of life is going to require in societies like ours.

Given the extent of pluralism in our society, we might question the degree to which it is reasonable to assume that all individuals will require skills of money making or skills which are useful in the market place. After all, some individuals' plans of life are predicated on a rejection of these institutions. Perhaps we might imagine the lives of monks or radical greens. Given the existence of such ascetic modes of life, we might critique the idea that the state should promote individuals' abilities to garner primary goods. In short, the critique is that the use of primary goods as a metric is unfair to some citizens, and unfairly privileges more comprehensively liberal doctrines. This point is made forcefully by Thomas Nagel, who writes that:

'the primary goods are not equally valuable in pursuit of all conceptions of the good. They will serve to advance many different individual life plans (some more efficiently than others), but they are less useful in implementing views that hold a good life to be readily achievable only in certain well-defined types of social structure, or only in a society that works concertedly for the realization of certain higher human capacities...The model contains a strong individualistic bias, which is further strengthened by the motivational assumptions of mutual disinterest and absence of envy. These assumptions have the effect of discounting the claims of conceptions of the good that depend heavily on the relation between one's own position and that of others' (Nagel, 1973: 228).

A similar point is made by Adina Schwartz, who argues that individuals who are convinced by socialist theories, particularly those expounded by the early Marx, would be highly averse to caching out their interests in terms of primary goods (Schwartz, 1973: 302-310). Indeed, following Richard Arneson we can term this critique the 'Nagel-Schwartz' objection, after these important contributions (Arneson, 1990). However, while this is a powerful complaint, and one that could be seriously damaging to other aspects of the Rawlsian account, it is not one that seriously imperils my own view. The real force of the Nagel-Schwartz objection is against the claim that the primary goods approach is fair between all comprehensive doctrines. Both Nagel's discussion of socially situated lifestyles,

and Schwartz's example of the socialist, shows that many citizens may have much less to gain than others from an increase in their holdings of primary goods.

By contrast, all my account requires is that what Rawls calls primary goods will be useful to adherents of many different comprehensive doctrines. So, it may well be true that, as Nagel contends, the specific make up of primary goods is far more hospitable to some comprehensive views than it is to others. If this is the case, it would follow that education policies designed to aid individuals in acquiring primary goods would be more beneficial to some citizens compared to others. However, it would still be true in a whole range of cases that individuals do benefit to some degree from increases in primary goods; particularly from easily transferable primary goods such as wealth and income. This conclusion is all that is required to sustain the point I am making here, which is that the fact education might aid individuals in gaining primary goods can be used to assuage some instances of citizens' objections to a common education policy.

Moreover, it is important to reiterate what I noted at the outset, which is that none of the arguments I am outlining here should be thought to apply as a matter of necessity. When faced by live choices such as living in a monastery or as green activists, we may concede some instances in which the argument from primary goods does not apply at all. Nevertheless, the importance of marketable skills and the availability of certain careers should not be underestimated. Truly ascetic plans of life are pursued by a very small proportion of the population. They are joined by many more individuals who, for a variety of reasons, do not pursue a career. Nevertheless, this does not diminish the point that marketable skills are of real importance to many citizens, well beyond simply those who value a certain ideal of autonomy, and including many devoutly religious citizens. As such, they can form an important part of the case showing why these skills are valuable across a wide range of society.

Conclusion

Each of the factors discussed above section provides good reason to think that many individuals will gain from an advanced liberal education, not merely those

who end up prioritising their autonomy as part of their comprehensive doctrine. Since comprehensive conceptions do not lead neatly into plans of action citizens must be prepared to interpret for themselves the implications of their ethical and religious beliefs. In light of the fact that most doctrines are not fully comprehensive, we must remember that many choices of life will not be determined at all by an individual's comprehensive doctrine. Since many people will endorse a variety of differing views, they must often balance competing considerations. Finally there is the fact that an advanced education is useful in securing many types of employment, which are instrumentally important in fulfilling other plans or are themselves important sources of self esteem.

Alone, each of these factors points towards a role for the skills of rational reflection, and thus supports an education designed to promote them. In each case, we have a reason to teach individuals the skills by which to form and revise a conception of the good that does not rely upon the notion that personal autonomy ought to be considered by the state as inherently valuable.

Importantly, these factors become more compelling once we consider them together. Thus, for instance, because it is wrong to assume that a comprehensive doctrine will determine completely an individual's entire plan of life, it makes more sense to assume that they will have an interest in acquiring the skills necessary to secure advanced employment. That is, while there is nothing intrinsic to a specific faith or creed that implies these skills are valuable, it does not follow that the citizens who follow these doctrines will not value such knowledge.

In the light of these considerations, political liberals may possess the resources to cope adequately with the problem of seeming to promote skills that are inimical to the life plans of some citizens. The example used to illustrate this problem was of a dedicated religious believer whose private projects are utterly antithetical with respect to reflecting on her deepest commitments. The broad response to this problem is to note that even if the very devout believer's doctrine has no place at all for autonomy, as a person these skills may well be valuable. Thus, in so far as this religious believer endorses a creed which is indeterminate in some cases, or is only partially comprehensive, she may have an interest in gaining skills of

reflection in order to apply her views to the situations she faces in everyday life. She may well therefore benefit from a more detailed focus on ethical and political dilemmas at school, if such an education helps her clarify her own views. Further, we should not forget the benefits an advanced education might have in securing primary goods, which are valuable to many individuals, not merely those whose life plans revolve around securing these goods.

Taken together, these complete the picture of how a political liberal education system can meet the possible claims of children while still responding fairly to pluralism. The core objection to the political model that has been running throughout the thesis is that children have an interest in the content of the beliefs they come to acquire, but political liberals seem bound to consider only the civic goals of education. To meet this complaint, I argued that a political liberal education must ensure that children acquire their views in the right way. This condition was expounded in terms of giving children the skills to assess and alter the views presented to them at home.

The problem with this response was that it opened up the possibility that my own account might fail to meet the test of legitimacy, and could not therefore be considered a fair response to the existence of pluralism in society. So, when discussing the need for a more robust ethical education, I considered the possibility that reasonable parents might reasonably reject the policy. In response, I argued that one could not reasonably object to this kind of schooling, since to do so is to impose one's beliefs unfairly onto the next generation. Following this, I considered the special case of science education, and the case of intelligent design in detail. Here I argued that the state could not plausibly avoid taking a position on contested issues, which was possibly a very damaging conclusion since these empirical issues were deeply entwined with broader views about metaphysics and theology. Since it is practically impossible to remain above these debates, I argued instead that the goal of the state should be to ensure that the science curriculum was compatible with many different philosophical and spiritual views. If this condition was met then while a common education would doubtless be controversial, and alter the views held in society, it would not preclude any

reasonable comprehensive doctrine. This was enough to secure the legitimacy of this aspect of the curriculum.

Following these defences of specific aspects of the model, I then considered a broader threat to the legitimacy of my account. This was the charge that the education necessary to give children the skills to assess different views would also promote skills which are inimical to some reasonable plans of life. If this charge was accurate, it would imply that my account should be rejected for the same reasons that we should reject perfectionism, namely that a sectarian liberalism is not an appropriate response to pluralism.

In response to this serious worry, I argued that in fact the skills promoted by this kind of education could be seen as valuable to individuals who hold a wide variety of different viewpoints, not merely those who think that autonomy is essential to living well. If accurate, these considerations allow my account to remain legitimate in a way other leading accounts are not. This is because, as I have shown throughout the thesis, the main problem with other leading accounts lies in their underlying justification, not their political implications.

At this point, it is worth reiterating the differences between this account of the value of autonomy and others that might be offered. The first possible defence of autonomy might be that only by living in an autonomous way do our lives have real meaning. This would be a strongly perfectionist defence of autonomy. The problem with this account is twofold. Firstly, it is questionable that the connection between choice and value really is as close as this account contends. More fundamentally though, the problem with this perfectionist defence is that we cannot expect citizens to come to an agreement about the special value of autonomy. Indeed, this privileged value of autonomy will be directly contradictory to the deepest beliefs of citizens with different ethical commitments or those with certain religious beliefs.

Instead of this explicitly perfectionist defence of autonomy, a different approach was suggested by proponents of the instrumental argument. They argued that we should defend autonomy's value through its usefulness in selecting a way of life in

which we are likely to flourish. Thus, make all citizens autonomous and they are each more likely to end up in a way of life that suits them. The problem with this approach is its basic assumptions that there are many ways of life in which individuals can flourish, and that individuals are better suited to some of these than others. These two assumptions proved just as sectarian as the more overtly perfectionist belief in the intrinsic value of autonomy.

In contrast to these approaches, my own defence of autonomy has focussed on its value to citizens who hold many different comprehensive views about ethics and the good. Thus I have focused on elements which will be common to citizens' lives despite their differing comprehensive doctrines. This has drawn attention to the common problem of applying abstract ideals to actual ethical dilemmas, and to the fact that most citizens do not simply accept ideas from one doctrine. Instead, citizens have much more nuanced and complex sets of belief. Each of these features shows the ineliminable role for deliberation and judgment in the decisions which will be faced by children as they grow up.

Further, an important argument running throughout the chapter has been the importance of distinguishing between the totality of the lives of citizens and their comprehensive doctrines. Thus we should not imagine that an actual citizen's desires or projects will be only those defined by their religious or philosophical doctrines. As such, it is important to note that the skills promoted by a liberal education will be useful in any number of rather mundane situations faced by citizens. As long as a relatively modest conception of autonomy is promoted it is thus possible to make an argument in its defence to adherents of a wide variety of different faiths and perspectives.

The critical advantage of this approach is that it is able to remain compatible with the core beliefs of many different comprehensive doctrines. It might be the case that only one of the religious conceptions in society is correct, and thus that only those citizens who follow this faith can live fully flourishing lives. Even then, we could still point to the value of an advanced education within the lives of believers, and commend this as a reason to promote it. My account does not require any

fundamental assumptions about what makes a human life go well, or about the relative worth of the different ways of life found in society. Instead, it is merely premised on a belief about the kind of skills which will be likely to help people live well, by their own understanding of what that consists in, in societies like ours. As such, the defence of this limited account of autonomy rests on the belief that autonomy will be useful, or at least not incompatible, with living well.

Conclusions

At the beginning of the thesis I outlined two broad goals which might guide education policy. These are the interests of children and the civic goals of education. I began by considering an approach which focussed squarely upon using education to aid children by increasing their chance of flourishing. This educational approach was linked to the broader theory known as perfectionism, which held that the role of the liberal state was to promote valid and worthwhile plans of life and to hinder empty or mistaken ones. The most prominent version of perfectionism linked the good life to a notion of autonomy. In education, liberal perfectionism thus supports the view that the role of schools is to increase the ability of children to formulate their own beliefs and become the authors of their own lives.

The difficulty with this view was that it rested upon assumptions which were deeply problematic. This is true even for those versions of perfectionism which do not rest on obviously sectarian views such as a Kantian view of the self. I showed this deep problem with the theory of perfectionism through a survey of its most influential defender, Joseph Raz. Raz's account of autonomy was shown to be inseparable from his background theory of value pluralism. Basing liberal policy on an assessment of the actual value of the different ways of life found in society cannot be a fair way of responding to pluralism, since the conflicts within pluralistic society arise because of the different opinions people have about the worth and accuracy of different lifestyles and belief systems. While the belief that many different ways of life are valuable appears to be an ecumenical way of assessing pluralism, in fact it is deeply controversial.

This survey of Raz had immediate consequences for the educational debate, since it undermined the instrumental argument developed by Brighouse, Arneson and Shapiro. This instrumental argument claimed to rest on no controversial assumptions about the good life. However, it does rely upon a similar conception of autonomy to that developed by Raz, and is in turn dependent on the

assumption of value pluralism. As such, even this limited defence of a perfectionist education must be rejected as sectarian.

The rejection of perfectionism pushed towards accepting the theory of political liberalism developed by John Rawls. By accepting that pluralism is best described as reasonable disagreement, we can avoid taking a position on those matters which divide society. Only by doing this can the liberal state possibly be in a position to arbitrate fairly between the competing claims of different sections of society. Following this, I outlined how political liberalism should best be understood. I considered two different ways of understanding the move towards neutrality between competing views. The first, epistemic strategy, argued that we should be neutral about the good because reason is indeterminate between a variety of possible options. The second strategy linked liberal neutrality to securing the stability of liberal institutions.

However, both of these defences of neutrality were eventually rejected. Pursuing the epistemic strategy seemed to imply a deep scepticism about knowledge of the good and theology, which is a problematic justification for liberalism. Further, the classifying of citizens as reasonable or unreasonable based on the philosophical sophistication of their views does not capture our beliefs about the purpose of liberalism.

A defence of neutrality based on the value of stability was equally problematic. The kind of neutrality recommended by political liberalism did not seem a plausible way of securing social order, and this approach would make our defence of liberalism perniciously pragmatic. Fortunately, while both of the defences seem to be suggested by some of Rawls' writings, they are not in fact the best interpretation of his view. Instead, the defence of political liberalism is explicitly moral, and is based upon the equal concern owed to all citizens of a liberal society.

The educational agenda outlined in *Political Liberalism* was explicitly focussed on the civic aims of education, rather than the concerns of children themselves. Recall that Rawls used education to distinguish a purely political liberalism from more comprehensive varieties. While comprehensive liberals would seek to use

education to foster values to guide the whole of life, political liberalism would seek merely to ensure that children could act as reasonable citizens and were aware of their political rights.

The following section of the thesis explored how far political liberalism really was committed to an education with a purely civic agenda, and what the implications of this commitment might be. In chapter four, I argued that political liberalism would not often provide sufficient reasons to act against parental wishes in the case of education. Proposing an alternative scheme of education was possible only if we relied upon a theory of what was in children's best interest. This in turn though would surely be connected to a wider theory of the human good, which the principle of legitimacy rules out as a basis for public policy. On the political liberal model parents would thus be free to pursue any scheme of education and upbringing for their children, with the important proviso that their children were capable of acting as reasonable citizens when they grew up.

Moreover, I argued that this proviso was far laxer than is commonly understood. Theorists such as Gutmann, Callan and Macedo argued that in fact the practical implications of political liberalism would be virtually indistinguishable from those of comprehensive liberalism. If this convergence thesis was correct, then the problems outlined in the thesis would be confined merely to the realm of abstract theory rather than practical politics. However, a closer consideration of the purposes of political liberalism as opposed to comprehensive liberalism revealed deep differences between the approaches, and these differences translated into significant real world consequences. The conclusion of this section was thus that Rawls was right to think that political liberal principles lead to a purely civically minded education, and to think that this education would be significantly different from that proposed by theorists concerned with promoting autonomy.

The third section of the thesis explored the problem with this account. This was that a purely civically minded education failed to take proper account of the interests that children have in education. This problem went to the heart of political liberalism because I argued it implied a serious challenge to the legitimacy

of the entire liberal state. This challenge to the legitimacy of a purely civic education arose because of my arguments that showed children could not be excluded from the justificatory community. These arguments were developed in chapter six, in which I explored the criteria of citizenship outlined in *Political Liberalism*. The possible exclusion of children was the consequence of the threshold view of citizenship, which held that a person must have sufficient capacities in order to be counted as a full citizen of a liberal state. This threshold view encountered fatal difficulties when tested against the actual processes of human development, as it would either permanently exclude some individuals from citizenship or include many children. In its place, I proposed a whole lives view which counted children as full citizens. This meant that the principle of legitimacy implied that children's possible objections must be taken into account.

Taking account of children's objections proved theoretically difficult. I argued in chapter seven that the best way was to take seriously the future complaints that children might have against policies which are applied to them now. In education, this meant that we must reject a curriculum or school system if the children who attend it can fairly complain that the education they received was not designed in way that took their interests into account. Since the political liberal model, as defend by Rawls, is purely civically minded it fails to take into account children's interests in education. As such it must be rejected.

At this point, I returned to the two possible problems that I offered at the outset of the thesis which I suggested might arise for education policy because of the permanence of pluralism in society. These were that education might become a vehicle to enforce the views of some of society onto others, or that education might become vacuous and ineffective. The first danger was shown to affect perfectionist theories, even of the more moderate kind. Closer investigation of political liberalism appeared to show that it was afflicted by the second.

In the final section I aimed to avoid this pessimistic conclusion, and show that political liberalism could be recast so as fairly to take children's interests into account, while retaining what was attractive about this response to pluralism. To

do this I attempted to develop an account of the worth of education which did not promote one single comprehensive doctrine or rest on a controversial account of the value of different ways of life.

The first part of this account focussed on the ways in which children come to acquire comprehensive doctrines. In chapter eight, I argued that the liberal state cannot simply allow parents to teach their children whatever values and beliefs they wish, since this ignores children's interest in the acquisition of views. Instead, the purpose of education should be to ensure that children can scrutinise and assess the beliefs they are taught by their parents as a child. To do this, education should ensure that children emerge with some knowledge of their world and its history, and having had the opportunity to subject different ethical and spiritual views to debate and scrutiny in class. The bulk of this chapter was designed to meet the possible problems of legitimacy faced by my account. A defence which was bolstered by the arguments of chapter nine, in which I pointed to a number of considerations to show why an advanced education, which may promote autonomy, is not detrimental to a large majority of citizens' plans.

The consequences of this project for the educational debate are to offer new ways of justifying a relatively familiar set of institutions. The kind of program promoted by my account is relatively similar to that promoted by theorists such as Harry Brighouse and Eamonn Callan. Where my account differs is in the theoretical justification for this set of institutions. In short, my account offers different and hopefully more compelling reasons to offer in defence of a liberal education.

So, while Callan attractively outlines the virtues of learning about other cultures and imaginatively engaging with the tenets of different comprehensive doctrines, we cannot derive this requirement from the purely civic goals of political liberalism. Citizens can theoretically (and many do) act in a perfectly reasonable way towards others without ever achieving the kind of reflective view that Callan puts forward. Similarly, Brighouse also sees the worth in children learning about different comprehensive doctrines and alternative ways of life from that pursued

by their parents. Indeed, he commends the idea of teaching children via a series of engaged guest speakers who are each adherents of different faiths. For him, though, this education is inextricably bound up with a desire to further children's autonomy. His account thus views pluralism as a series of possible ways of life, a view which is deeply problematic. Instead, I have justified the scrutiny of views through the need for children to come to views which are coherent and plausible. The imperative is to be fair to children, not to raise reasonable citizens or to produce autonomous individuals.

As well as providing new arguments which contribute to the existing debate over how to justify education policies in a liberal regime, the thesis is also relevant to broader debates about political liberalism and pluralism more generally. Specifically, I have argued that political liberals cannot ignore children, or merely treat children as future citizens. Children are people now, and there is no plausible way to exclude them from citizenship which does not undermine the core purposes of political liberalism. I showed this through thinking about the threshold view. I argued that no possible set of capacities could differentiate children from adults. This conclusion formed a building block of the overall argument, but is also important in its own right and relevant to theorists who do not accept the political liberal principle of legitimacy. Any liberal theory which begins from a premise of equal treatment of citizens must also have a view about what makes an individual a citizen. While it may seem natural to want to exclude children, on account of their diminished faculties, in fact this tactic will always be unstable. Whatever grounds we give for excluding children will either be based on some notion of capacities, a route which will imply excluding some adults, or will be based simply on age, which is a reason that appears perniciously similar to discriminating against people simply because they are female or a member of an ethnic minority. By contrast, the whole lives account I developed is able to treat children differently for the right reasons, and is thus a valuable addition to a variety of theorists beyond those who adhere to political liberal principles.

In the political context, I argued that the requirement to treat children as citizens implied that they must be considered when we decide whether a given set of

institutions or policies is legitimate. The first important conclusion that follows from this is that political liberalism must demand more than a purely civic education. By definition, a purely civic education focuses on the interests of society rather than the interests the child has in education. While these societal interests are undoubtedly important, a purely civic education thus abrogates our responsibilities to our children.

More broadly, considering the case of education and our responsibilities to children rendered problematic the aim of remaining freestanding from debates over questions of the good and human flourishing. If we consider only adults, it seems relatively plausible for the state simply to allow citizens to act in accordance with their own views, which may or may not be in their best interests. The role of the state is thus as an arbiter between competing claims. In this case, it does not seem overly problematic that some comprehensive doctrines are bizarre or may not be conducive to the flourishing of individuals who pursue it. We allow individuals to pursue whatever way of life they see fit, even in cases where we think there are good reasons to doubt its worth. It was for this reason, amongst others, that I argued that political liberals were bound to class views as reasonable based on political, rather than metaphysical, considerations.

By contrast, in the case of education it seems difficult for the state to play only this role as neutral arbiter. The education system is an important aspect of the environment in which children's views come to be held. As such, through the education system, the state stands between parents and communities who may want to pass on their views. The fact that some comprehensive doctrines are bizarre or undermining of the child's future well-being is much more problematic in this case, since they will be passed on to children who can legitimately object.

The case of education has thus served as a vehicle to show that political liberals cannot simply be concerned with how to arbitrate legitimately between the claims of individuals who hold different doctrines, but must be concerned with the effects holding different views will have on the believers themselves. This constitutes a significant change in the political liberal view. However, I have also

argued it does not have to imply abandoning what made the project attractive in the first place. By considering the value of liberalism to many different ways of life, we can promote a genuinely liberal way of thinking which is compatible with a wide variety of different comprehensive doctrines.

Bibliography

National curriculum of England and Wales, accessed at

<http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/index.aspx>.

Ackermann, Bruce. (1980) *Social Justice in the Liberal State*, London: Yale University Press.

Archard, David. (2002) 'Children, Multiculturalism and Education', in *The Moral and Political Status of Children*. Archard and McLeod (Eds), 142-160, Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Aries, Peter. (1962) *Centuries of Childhood*, London: Jonathan Cape.

Arneson, Richard. (1996) with Shapiro, Ian. 'Democratic Autonomy and Religious Freedom', in *Political Order*, Shapiro and Hardin (eds), (Nomos XXXVIII). New York: New York University Press.

-(2003) 'Liberal Neutrality on the Good: An Autopsy' in *Perfectionism and Neutrality: Essays in Liberal Theory*. Klosko and Wall (eds), 191-208. New York: Roman and Lithfield.

Barry, Brian. (1995a) *A Treatise on Social Justice, Volume II: Justice as Impartiality*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

-(1995b) John Rawls and the Search for Stability, *Ethics*, Vol. 105, No. 4, pp 874-915.

Brighouse, Harry. (1998) Civic Education and Liberal Legitimacy, *Ethics*, Vol. 108, No. 4, pp. 729-745.

- (2003) *School Choice and Social Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- (2006) *On Education*, New York: Routledge.
- (2009) with Swift, Adam. 'Legitimate Parental Partiality', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp 43-80.
- Burt, Shelly. (1994) 'Religious Parents, Secular Schools: A Liberal Defence of an Illiberal Education', *The Review of Politics*, vol. 56, no. 1, pp 51-70.
- Callan, Eamonn. (1997) *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Caney, Simon. (1995) 'Anti-Perfectionism and Rawlsian Liberalism', *Political Studies*, Vol. 43, Issue 2, pp. 246-264.
- Chan, Joseph. (2000) 'Legitimacy, Unanimity and Perfectionism', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 29, No 1, pp 5-42.
- Clarke, Simon. (1999) 'Contractarianism, Liberal Neutrality, and Epistemology'. *Political Studies*, XLVII, pp. 627-642.
- Clayton, Matthew. (2006) *Justice and Legitimacy in Upbringing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, Joshua. (1993) 'Moral Pluralism and Political Consensus' in *The Idea of Democracy*, Roemer and Hampton (eds), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coleman, Joe. (2002) 'Answering Susan; Liberalism, Civil Education and the Status of Younger Persons' in *The Moral and Political Status of Children*. Archard and McLeod (Eds), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Daniels, Norman. (1988) *Am I my parents keeper?: An essay on justice between the Young and Old*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dawkins, Richard. (2006) *The God Delusion*, London: Bantam Books.

Douthat, Ross. (2009) *Heaven and Nature*, New York Times, 20/12/2009.

Dworkin, Ronald. (1990) 'Foundations of Liberal Equality'. in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values XI*. Peterson, Grethe (ed), pp 16-22. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.

Estlund, David. (2008) *Democratic Authority: A Philosophical Framework*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Feinberg, Joel. (2007) 'The Child's Right to an Open Future' in *Philosophy of Education: An Anthology*, Curren, Randall (ed), Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Galston, William. (1999) 'Value Pluralism and Liberal Political Theory', *The American Political Science review*, Vol 93, No 4, pp 769-778.

Goldburg, Lorna. (2006) 'Raised in Cultic Groups: The Impact on Development of Certain Aspects of Character'. *Cultic Studies Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 01-27.

Gutmann, Amy. (1995) 'Civic Education and Social Diversity', *Ethics*, Vol. 105, No.3 pp.557-579.

Hannan, Sarah and Vernon, Richard. (2008) 'Parent's Rights: A Role based approach', *Theory and Research in Education*, Vol.6, No. 2, pp. 173-189.

Kelly, Erin and McPherson, Lionel. (2001) 'On Tolerating the Unreasonable', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp 38-55.

Klosko, George. (2000) *Democratic Procedures and Liberal Consensus*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, Will. (2003) Liberal theories of multiculturalism, in '*Rights, Culture and the Law; themes from the philosophy of Joseph Raz*', Meyer, Paulson and Pogge (eds), Oxford: Oxford University press.

Lecce, Steven, (2008) *Against Perfectionism: Defending Liberal Neutrality*, London: University of Toronto Press.

-(2009) 'Should democracy grow up? Children and Voting rights', *Intergenerational Justice Review* . Vol. 1, No. 4.

Macedo, Steve. (1995) Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism: The Case of God vs John Rawls?, *Ethics*, Vol. 105, No. 3, pp. 468-496.

-(2000) *Diversity and Distrust: Civic Education in a Multicultural Democracy*, Boston: Harvard University Press.

Matravers, Matt and Mendus, Susan (2003) 'The reasonableness of pluralism', in *The culture of toleration in diverse societies: Reasonable tolerance*, Castiglione and McKinnon (eds), Manchester: Manchester University press.

McKinnon, Catriona. (2003) 'Toleration and the Character of Pluralism' in '*The Culture of Toleration in Diverse Societies: Reasonable Tolerance*' McKinnon and Castiglione (eds), Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Nagel, Thomas. (2008) Public Education and Intelligent Design. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 187-205.

-(1973) Rawls on Justice. *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 82, No. 2, pp. 220-234.

Noggle, Robert. (2002) *Special Agents: Children's Autonomy and Parental Authority*. In *The Moral and Political Status of Children*. Archard and McLeod (Eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Quong, Johnathan. (2004) 'The Scope of Public Reason'. *Political Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 2, pp. 233-250.

Rawls, John. (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

-(1993) *Political Liberalism*, New York: Columbia press.

Raz, Joseph. (1994) *Ethics in the public domain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-(1986) *The Morality of Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reich, Robert. (2002) *Bridging Liberalism and Multiculturalism in American Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schoeman, Ferdinand. (1980) 'Rights of Children, Rights of Parents and the Moral Basis of the Family'. *Ethics*, Vol. 91, No. 1, pp. 6-19.

Schwartz, Adina. (1973) 'Moral Neutrality and Primary Goods'. *Ethics*, Vol. 83, No. 4, pp. 294-307.

Shachtman, Tom. (2006) *Rumspringa: To be or not to be Amish*, New York: North Point Press.

Shapiro, Barbara. (1983) *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth Century England*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sher, George. (1997) *Beyond Neutrality: Perfectionism and politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sober, Elliott. (2007) '*What is wrong with intelligent design*', *The Quarterly review of biology*. Vol. 82, No. 1, pp. 3-8.

Taylor, Charles. (1992) *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Tomasi, John. (2001) *Liberalism beyond Justice: Citizens, Society and the Boundaries of Political Theory*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Warnick, Bryan and Foose, David. (2007) 'Does teaching creationism facilitate student autonomy?', *Theory and Research in Education*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 257-378.

