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The Good of Toleration

Tolerance is often said to be a puzzling or paradoxical value. Within the covers of a single edited volume,[1] for example, David Heyd describes it as an "elusive" virtue, while Thomas Scanlon speaks of the "difficulty" of tolerance and George Fletcher of its "instability." Bernard Williams even goes so far as to suggest that it may be an "impossible" virtue. In this essay, I will explain why tolerance has been seen as an especially problematic value. But the apparently puzzling character of tolerance will not be my primary focus, nor will I attempt directly to dissolve the various puzzles and paradoxes that have preoccupied many writers on the subject.

The appearance of paradox arises in particularly acute form when one tries to provide a general justification of tolerance: that is, a general argument as to why people ought to be tolerant of others. Important as the issue of justification is, however, I will concentrate most of my attention

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1. David Heyd (ed.), *Toleration: An Elusive Virtue* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

on a slightly different issue. The question that concerns me is the question of what exactly is good about toleration, or, to put it another way, why so many people consider it to be an important value in its own right.[2] What features of the practice of toleration enable it to attract the allegiance of its supporters? Clearly, this question is closely related to the question of justification, since any attempted justification will represent toleration as being good in some respect, and any account of the good of toleration might in principle be taken to provide a reason why people ought to be tolerant. However, questions about the good of toleration are in one way less ambitious than the question of its justification, because the features of toleration that enable it to earn the allegiance of its supporters may not suffice to justify it to others. At the same time, attempts to provide a general justification of tolerance sometimes neglect the less ambitious question with which I am primarily concerned. In attempting to provide reasons, acceptable to all, for endorsing a regime of toleration, they sometimes neglect the question of why some people find toleration an especially good or valuable feature of a society.

So I want to distinguish between the question of *the justification of toleration* and the question of *the good of toleration*. Once this distinction is drawn, however, the answer to the second question may seem obvious. In a pluralistic society, after all, a regime of tolerance is, almost by definition, the only alternative we have to perpetual conflict and strife. If that is right, then the reason why tolerance is good may seem straightforward. It is good because a peaceful and harmonious society is impossible without it.

This is an essentially instrumental argument, and it in no way diminishes the argument's importance to observe that it does not actually address the question I have posed. What interests me is the fact that, while recognizing the evident power and importance of the instrumental case for tolerance, many people also regard tolerance as an intrinsically important value: one whose significance is not limited to its instrumental advantages. My question about the good of toleration is the question of why exactly this should be so? The puzzling or paradoxical features of tolerance serve to sharpen this question, and so I do want to discuss them. But, as I have said, it may be possible to illuminate the good of toleration without fully dissolving the paradoxes that arise when one tries to provide a general justification of tolerance.

2. In keeping with much contemporary philosophical writing on the subject, I will use the terms *tolerance* and *toleration* interchangeably. This represents a slight departure from ordinary usage, but does not, I believe, affect any issue of substance.

Before I address the main issue with which I am concerned, I need to explain what I take to be included under the heading of *tolerance* or *toleration*. There is, of course, an enormous literature on the subject, and in that literature one finds characterizations of toleration that differ along a number of significant dimensions. I will begin by reviewing some of the most important of these differences, with the aim of situating my own discussion in relation to the existing literature.

First, some writers define the attitude of toleration fairly narrowly, so that one does not count as tolerating a belief or practice unless one strongly disapproves of or objects to it. In this spirit, Bernard Williams says that the need for religious toleration arises when one group believes that another is "blasphemously, disastrously, obscenely wrong." Toleration, Williams says, "is required only for the intolerable."[3] Similarly, though less dramatically, Thomas Scanlon interprets tolerance as "an attitude that requires us to hold in check certain feelings of opposition and disapproval."[4] Others, however, take a broader view, insisting that one need not disapprove of a belief or practice in order to count as being tolerant of it. According to this view, it is enough that one does not one-self share the belief or participate in the practice.

Second, most political philosophers think of toleration as a distinctively liberal value that is associated with such familiar individual rights as the right to freedom of religion, conscience, speech, and association. However, some writers take a wider historical perspective, and are prepared to count as an instance of toleration any institutional regime that makes it possible for people with different values and outlooks to live together peacefully. Thus, for example, Michael Walzer takes toleration to consist in any of a wide variety of arrangements that have made possible "the peaceful coexistence of groups of people with different histories, cultures, and identities."[5] Similarly, Benjamin Kaplan, in his fascinating historical account of toleration in early modern Europe, emphasizes that his concern is with toleration understood as a "form of behavior: peaceful coexistence with others who adhered to a different religion."[6] Accordingly, he is prepared to count as an instance of toleration any

3. Bernard Williams, "Toleration: An Impossible Virtue?," in Heyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–27, at p. 18.
4. Thomas Scanlon, "The Difficulty of Tolerance," in Heyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 226–239 at p. 226.
5. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 2.
6. Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 8.

arrangement that "enabled people of different faiths to live together in the same towns and villages."[7]

Third, many writers have noted that, on one interpretation at least, the concept of toleration is asymmetrical. In other words, it is the prerogative of the strong to tolerate the weak, but the weak are not in a position to tolerate the strong. This asymmetrical connotation of the term was in fact crucial to the emergence of toleration as a political value during and after the European Wars of Religion. What toleration required was that religious majorities should, within limits—extremely narrow limits by contemporary standards—tolerate religious minorities, but those minorities were not granted equal status, and they certainly could not presume to tolerate the majority. The asymmetrical character of toleration has exposed it to criticism since at least the eighteenth-century: from writers like Goethe, Kant, and Thomas Paine, no less than from contemporary figures like Herbert Marcuse[8] and Wendy Brown.[9] Goethe, for example, famously said that "to tolerate is to insult," and Paine said that "Toleration is not the opposite of intolerance but the counterpart of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience and the other of granting it."[10] But although some continue to regard tolerance as being, in view of its asymmetrical character, a limited virtue at best, many others have, in effect, reinterpreted the idea so that it is understood to apply symmetrically to groups and individuals of differing size, strength, and power. Each of us is called upon to tolerate everyone else. It is this notion of toleration, rather than the asymmetrical or hierarchical one, that most contemporary liberal thinkers mean to be endorsing. However, the tension between the two interpretations continues to cast a shadow over discussions of toleration. This is apparent, for example, in Rainer Forst's contrast between the "dark and pessimistic story"[11] of the "permission conception"[12]

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7. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

8. Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in R.P. Wolff, B. Moore, and H. Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 95–137.

9. Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

10. Both quoted in Kaplan, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–9.

11. Rainer Forst, "Toleration and Democracy," unpublished typescript presented to the Colloquium in Legal, Political, and Social Philosophy at the NYU Law School on November 8, 2007, p. 1.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

of toleration and the "bright and optimistic"[13] story of the "respect conception."[14] According to the permission conception, "[t]oleration means that the authority gives qualified permission to the members of the minority to live according to their beliefs on the condition that the minority accepts the dominant position of the authority."[15] According to the respect conception, "democratic citizens respect each other as legal and political equals even though they differ greatly in their ethical-religious views about the good and true way of life."[16] Forst argues that it would be a mistake to suppose that the respect conception has simply superseded the permission conception. He believes instead, and not implausibly, that versions of these contrasting stories continue to be reflected in contemporary thought and practice.

Fourth, most writers recognize that there is a distinction between tolerance as a social practice and tolerance as a personal virtue or attitude. As a practice, tolerance is defined and enforced by a legal or institutional regime. As a personal virtue or attitude, it is instead a feature of individual character. Although some theorists of toleration are more interested in the practice and others are more interested in the attitude, there is a significant question, which is recognized as such by many, about the relation between tolerance as a practice and tolerance as an attitude.

These four distinctions make it easier to appreciate the reasons why toleration has seemed to many people to be an elusive or even paradoxical value. One seeming paradox—we may call it the paradox of suppressed disapproval—arises in particularly acute form for those who concentrate on toleration as a personal attitude and take it to consist, roughly, in a disposition not to interfere with beliefs and practices of which one strongly disapproves. For those who take this position, there appears to be a dilemma. On the one hand, an unwillingness to interfere with the beliefs and practices of others will not count as tolerant at all unless it is accompanied by disapproval of those beliefs and practices. So, for example, a pluralist about value who regards many different ways of life as good, and who for that reason is happy to accommodate a diverse range of beliefs and practices, will not count as tolerant according to this view. Nor will a skeptic who is equally hospitable to diverse values because he or she does not believe that any of them has a distinctive claim to the truth. On the other hand, if we restrict ourselves to

13. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

cases in which the agent deeply disapproves of the practices that are candidates for toleration, then it is unclear why it should be a virtue to tolerate them. After all, it would not be a virtue to tolerate, say, murder or assault, and so it is not obvious why it should be considered desirable to tolerate other forms of behavior that elicit our strong disapproval. The upshot is that many of the cases in which people are willing to accommodate one another are not properly thought of as instances of tolerance, and many genuine instances of tolerance are cases in which accommodation is unjustified. Faced with this dilemma, the scope for justified tolerance can seem to shrink to the vanishing point.

A second seeming paradox, which I will call the paradox of foundational tolerance, arises for those who are concerned to provide a justification of the practice of toleration. As we have seen, there are powerful instrumental arguments to be made on behalf of a regime of toleration. Powerful though they are, however, those arguments, like all instrumental arguments, have their limitations. They are compelling only so long as the practice of toleration remains an effective means of securing the advertised advantages. In circumstances where its capacity to secure those advantages lapses, these arguments lose their force. In particular, if one group in a pluralistic society becomes substantially more numerous and powerful than the others, the members of the ascendant group may feel that they can accomplish more through intolerant policies than they can by adhering to a regime of toleration. The cost to them of suppressing dissent, they may feel, would be minimal and the gains significant. Under these conditions, instrumental considerations may not suffice to tilt the balance of reasons in favor of toleration. So instrumental justifications of toleration, powerful though they are in many circumstances, extend only so far. Yet many people believe that practices of toleration are justified as a matter of principle and not merely on instrumental grounds.

The paradox of foundational tolerance arises in the attempt to provide such a principled justification. The obvious strategy—it may look like the only strategy—is to identify some moral premises from which principles of toleration can be derived. But if one does this, then it seems that one is joining the very argument with respect to which one was advocating a tolerant stance. For one is perforce defending the practice of toleration by appealing to what is, inevitably, just one moral outlook among the many that are represented in the society, and the question is why that one outlook should occupy a privileged justificatory position? Those who advocate other outlooks may reject the proposed regime of toleration, despite the protections it offers them, on the ground that, at a deeper level, it is rooted in, and in that sense favors, the very outlook they oppose. This might not be a problem for anyone attempting to defend a version of the "permission conception."

But for liberals who seek to embed practices of toleration within a broader conception of a society of equals, this result has often seemed embarrassing. It threatens to turn liberalism itself into just "another sectarian doctrine,"[17] to borrow Rawls's memorable phrase. So the "paradox of foundational tolerance" might be expressed as follows: On the one hand, it is hard to see how a regime of toleration can be given a principled justification without appealing to *some* principle. Yet, on the other hand, any particular principle to which one might appeal is likely to be contested in a pluralistic society. If one appeals to such a principle, then partisans of opposing principles are likely to claim that a regime of toleration that is justified in this way is a sham. Although superficially tolerant of diverse outlooks, it is, at a more fundamental level, biased in favor of a particular moral outlook which supports that regime for its own "sectarian" reasons. It is in much this spirit, I take it, that defenders of conservative religious views sometimes argue that a regime of liberal toleration is really just an expression of a kind of "secular humanism" that they reject.

Bernard Williams' solution to this problem is to deny that toleration as a practice does rest on a particular moral value or principle. Toleration as a *virtue*, Williams believes, can only avoid the paradox of suppressed disapproval if it is rooted in a broadly Kantian conception of the value of autonomy, for only a belief that it is good for individuals to be autonomous makes it possible coherently to think that it is valuable to allow the misguided beliefs or practices of others to flourish. But if the *practice* of toleration rests ultimately on the value of individual autonomy, then it is indeed vulnerable to the paradox of foundational tolerance. As Williams puts it, the values of autonomy themselves

> . . . may be rejected, and to the extent that toleration rests on those
> values, then toleration will also be rejected. The practice of tolera-
> tion cannot be based on a value such as individual autonomy and
> hope to escape from substantive disagreements about the good.
> This really is a contradiction, because it is only a substantive
> view of goods such as autonomy that could yield the value that is
> expressed by the practices of toleration.[18]

To avoid the contradiction, liberals could of course simply concede that they are appealing to the contested value of autonomy, but then, Williams

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17. John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 14(1985), pp. 223–251, at p. 246.
18. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

says, they will not have given anyone who does not share that value a reason to accept the practice of toleration. What prevents the paradox of foundational tolerance from being fatal to the justification of toleration as a practice, Williams concludes, is the fact that the practice, unlike the virtue, need not rest on the value of autonomy. Instead, he argues,

> …the practice of toleration has to be sustained not so much by a pure principle resting on a value of autonomy as by a wider and more mixed range of resources. Those resources include an active skepticism against fanaticism and the pretensions of its advocates; conviction about the manifest evils of toleration's absence; and, quite certainly, power, to provide Hobbesian reminders to the more extreme groups that they will have to settle for coexistence.[19]

Rawls's idea of an "overlapping consensus"[20] can be thought of as providing a similar solution to the problem of foundational tolerance. Although Rawls applies his idea to the justification of liberal principles of justice in general and not solely to the principle or practice of toleration, he makes clear that toleration has a central place among the liberal values that an overlapping consensus would support. Indeed, he says that the second of the "two fundamental questions" to which his "political liberalism" is addressed, and to which the idea of an overlapping consensus helps supply the answer, concerns "the grounds of toleration understood in a general way."[21] And he illustrates the idea of an overlapping consensus by contrasting it with a hypothetical agreement on the principle of toleration reached on the basis of views like those held by Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth century. Such an agreement, he says, would be a "mere modus vivendi,"[22] in which toleration was accepted solely on prudential grounds or on the basis of self- or group-interest. An overlapping consensus, by contrast, has a different character. When such a consensus is in place, then toleration and other liberal principles are not justified prudentially but neither are they justified by appeal to a liberal conception of autonomy or to any other "comprehensive moral doctrine." Instead, they are derived from shared ideas that are implicit in the public political culture of a democratic society and which proponents of

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.
20. See John Rawls, "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 7(1987): 1–25, and *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), Lecture Four.
21. *Political Liberalism*, p. 47.
22. *Political Liberalism*, p. 148; see also "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus," p. 11.

all reasonable doctrines can accept. The result, Rawls believes, is a prin-
cipled rather than an instrumental defense of liberal values and institu-
tions, because each of the participants in the consensus has moral reasons
drawn from within his or her comprehensive doctrine for affirming the
shared ideas and the liberal arrangements they support. But sectarianism
is avoided because there is no one comprehensive doctrine that all of the
participants in the consensus affirm or which plays a privileged role in
justifying liberal arrangements.[23]

This suggests a solution to the paradox of foundational tolerance
that differs in one respect from Williams's, inasmuch as all of the diverse
views represented within a Rawlsian overlapping consensus are under-
stood as providing *moral* reasons of one kind or another for accepting
liberal arrangements. But Rawls shares Williams' conviction that it
would be fatal to the case for liberal practices if their defense were to rest
exclusively on an appeal to a Kantian conception of autonomy. He also
shares Williams's view that the preferred alternative is to demonstrate
that those practices can be supported by a "wider and more mixed range
of resources," even if, in Rawls's view, the resources in question are all
supposed to be moral in character.

The two paradoxes I have mentioned—the paradox of suppressed
disapproval and the paradox of foundational tolerance—are responsible
for much of the impression that toleration is an especially perplexing or
elusive value. As I have said, my aim in this paper will not be to dissolve
either of these paradoxes, nor will I attempt to provide a general justifi-
cation for either the practice or the attitude of toleration. My aim will
instead be to consider what it is about toleration that makes it seem to
many people to be an attractive value or ideal in its own right. To make
this more precise, let me begin by locating my inquiry in relation to the
various distinctions I have mentioned.

My question will be what it is about living under an effective regime
of toleration that seems attractive to people. In speaking of a regime of

23. Rawls also says that, by making the justification of liberal institutions independent
     not merely of any particular religious view but also of any particular moral or philo-
     sophical doctrine, an overlapping consensus represents an extension of the principle
     of toleration from religion to philosophy itself. He writes: "Were justice as fair-
     ness to make an overlapping consensus possible it would complete and extend the
     movement of thought that began three centuries ago with the gradual acceptance
     of the principle of toleration and led to the nonconfessional state and equal liberty
     of conscience…To apply the principles of toleration to philosophy itself is to leave
     to citizens themselves to settle the questions of religion, philosophy, and morals in
     accordance with views they freely affirm" (*Political Liberalism*, p. 154).

toleration, I have in mind distinctively liberal practices and institutions. I assume that the general character of a liberal regime is familiar to everyone and requires no special explanation, except to say that I take the ideal of toleration informing these regimes to be symmetrical rather than asymmetrical or hierarchical in character. Although there are variations among different liberal regimes, and although there is room for disagreement at the margins about the proper form for such a regime to take, I will not address these disagreements. Nor will I compare liberal regimes with other arrangements that may make peaceful coexistence possible in some circumstances, and that some would, therefore, consider instances of toleration in a broad sense. I think there is much to be learned from studying the wide range of practices that have made peaceful coexistence among contending groups possible in different times and places. But I assume that liberal toleration comprises a distinctive set of arrangements that extend beyond mere *de facto* coexistence, and I want to consider why such arrangements have seemed to many people to be valuable in their own right. It is possible that the good of liberal toleration, so understood, has also been made available by other practices and arrangements in other times and places, though whether that is so and what it might show are not questions that I will explore.

My inquiry will straddle the distinction between toleration as a social practice and tolerance as a personal virtue or attitude. My primary focus will be on the practice of liberal toleration, but I will be asking what makes that practice appealing to individuals, and in addressing this second question I will be saying something about individual attitudes. In both cases, however, I will construe liberal toleration relatively broadly, and will not take it to require or be defined in relation to feelings of disapproval. So far as the social practice is concerned, a regime of liberal toleration extends a set of privileges and protections to a wide range of beliefs and forms of conduct, and although some of those beliefs and forms of conduct will attract disapproval, the protected class is not restricted by definition to those that do. My discussion of personal attitudes, meanwhile, will focus on the question of what people find valuable about a regime of toleration so understood, and since the practice does not require feelings of disapproval it would be unduly exclusive to insist that the attitudes supporting the practice must involve disapproval.

There are additional reasons for preferring a broader rather than a narrower understanding of liberal toleration. First, to insist on linking toleration to disapproval can lead us to neglect the interesting and important relationships among toleration and other similar practices, such as practices of compromise, accommodation, and the acceptance of reasonable disagreement, for those practices are necessary even where people

differ without disapproving of one another.[24] Here the historical concept of toleration, with its contingent history and penumbra of associations, may lead us astray. We may think of toleration as a *sui generis* value with origins in the Wars of Religion, rather than situating it within the wider context of liberal responses to disagreement. Toleration, in other words, is best seen as belonging to a range of values and practices, which, taken together, comprise the complex set of responses toward disagreement that are part of the normative repertoire of a liberal society.

Second, a broader notion of toleration allows for the fact that becoming less judgmental—less disapproving—is a way of becoming more tolerant.[25] By contrast, a narrow notion of toleration requires us to say, unhelpfully in my view, that becoming less judgmental is not a way of becoming more tolerant but rather a way of making tolerance unnecessary. Relatedly, a broader notion of toleration makes it easier to recognize that reflection on the diversity of human value and experience can serve as a resource to combat intolerant tendencies within oneself, by leading one to moderate or suspend one's unreflective attitudes of disapproval. On a broader conception, in other words, pluralistic conviction can be seen as encouraging and supporting tolerant attitudes rather than as offering an alternative to them or rendering them unnecessary.

Finally, if one is interested in the paradox of foundational tolerance, then there is yet another reason for preferring a broader to a narrower notion of liberal toleration. Or, at any rate, there is such a reason if one accepts the Rawls-Williams view about the form that a solution to the paradox must take. According to that view, as we have seen, the solution lies in the idea that a regime of toleration can be supported for different reasons by different people. If one accepts this view, then one will attach significance to any personal attitude that may reliably lead people to support such a regime. Both pluralistic and skeptical beliefs about the nature of the human good are likely to be included among these toleration-supporting attitudes, because either sort of belief may make people more likely to accept practices and ways of life that differ from their own. If this is correct, then a narrow definition that excludes any pluralism-based or skepticism-based acceptance of differing practices from counting as an instance of genuine tolerance is bound to seem misleading at best. Still,

24. On accommodation, see the important papers by Seana Shiffrin: "Paternalism, Unconscionability Doctrine, and Accommodation," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 29(2000): 205–250, and "Egalitarianism, Choice-Sensitivity, and Accommodation," in R.J. Wallace, P. Pettit, S. Scheffler, and M. Smith, eds., *Reason and Value: Themes from the Moral Philosophy of Joseph Raz*, pp. 270–302.
25. See John Horton, "Toleration as a Virtue," in Heyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 28–43, at 37–38.

my aim is not to engage in a turf battle over the meaning of the word *tolerance*. The interesting questions, in my view, have to do with which social practices a just and liberal society needs in order to accommodate the phenomena of difference and disagreement, and which values and attitudes might help to support or stabilize those practices. My interest in these questions will shape my use of the terms *tolerance* and *toleration* in the ways that I have described, but narrower uses of those terms may be more appropriate for inquiries that have a different focus.

Moreover, despite my general preference for a relatively broad understanding of liberal toleration, my interpretation of the concept does incorporate one significant restriction, which derives from the historical association of the term *toleration* with the phenomena of religious diversity and religious conflict in particular. We now take the practice of liberal toleration to comprehend more than just religion, and for good reason. But in generalizing from the case of religious diversity, we should take care not to overgeneralize. One of the salient features of religious diversity is that it is a species of *normative diversity*, by which I mean diversity with respect to people's values, principles, and ideals. In this respect, it differs from diversity with respect to non-normative features of people, such as their age, physical or biological characteristics, or geographical location. Normative diversity poses special problems and can be the source of particularly intractable conflicts. At the same time, there are distinctive goods associated with the toleration or accommodation of normative diversity, and it is this sort of diversity to which I shall take our practices of toleration to be addressed. The historical emphasis on religious diversity is, from our perspective, too narrow, for religious diversity is not the only significant form of normative diversity. But it has historically been the most explosive—and in that respect the most important—form of normative diversity, and it is, therefore, no accident that practices of toleration emerged historically as a response to the phenomena of religious diversity and religious conflict in particular. In construing our practices of toleration as extending beyond this special but distinctively important case, I will nevertheless continue to interpret them as addressed to normative diversity rather than to diversity of all kinds.

I have distinguished the question I am concerned with, which is "What is it about living under an effective regime of toleration that seems good or attractive to many people?" from the more ambitious question of "What might justify and, in that sense, ground the practice of toleration?" My answer rests on the thought that there is something distinctively valuable about the types of relationship with other people that a regime of toleration encourages. This is a point that Thomas Scanlon has also made. Scanlon says that our reasons to value tolerance lie "in the relation with one's fellow citizens that tolerance

makes possible."[26] Although he does not describe in detail the kind of rela-
tion he has in mind, the general idea seems to be that people in a tolerant
society relate to each other "within a framework of mutual respect."[27] Tol-
erance expresses "a recognition of others" as being entitled to live as they
choose and "to contribute to the definition of our society."[28] The intolerant
alternative, Scanlon says, is to regard the standing of others as members of
one's society as conditional on their sharing one's values, and this involves "a
form of alienation from one's fellow citizens."[29]

I think that Scanlon is right about this, but I don't think that his
remarks provide an exhaustive account of the relational goods that are
made available within a tolerant, pluralistic society. In the space that
remains, I will develop a different (though not incompatible) character-
ization of the type of relationship among citizens that a tolerant society
encourages, with the aim of calling attention to another way in which
toleration is a good.

A regime of toleration is a response to normative diversity, and so to
the important role played in human life by values, ideals, and principles.
For backhanded evidence of the importance of that role we have only
to reflect on the extent, ferocity, and persistence of the conflicts that
have arisen throughout human history among those who have professed
allegiance to differing values or ideals. As Rawls observes, "[t]he most
intractable struggles…are confessedly for the sake of the highest things:
for religion, for philosophical views of the world, and for different moral
conceptions of the good."[30] This may seem surprising. One might expect
that the most profound and intense conflicts would arise not from nor-
mative disagreement but simply from brute struggles for power or for the
control of scarce resources. Yet even when people do engage in battles for
power or resources, there is a strong tendency for them to present and to
experience those battles as involving clashes of values or principles and,
as Rawls observes, such clashes can be the most difficult of all to resolve.
Indeed, after making the comment I have quoted, Rawls continues:

> We should find it remarkable that, so deeply opposed in these
> ways, just cooperation among free and equal citizens is possible at
> all. In fact, historical experience suggests that it rarely is.[31]

26. Scanlon, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 231.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
30. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, p. 4.
31. *Ibid.*

As an institutional response to the importance in human life of values, ideals, and principles, a regime of toleration must maintain a delicate balance between two complementary ways of understanding the relevant form of importance. On the one hand, what matters for many institutional purposes is simply the fact that the values, principles, and ideals are important *to* their adherents. Yet, on the other hand, a regime of toleration depends for its effectiveness on an appreciation of the fact that, for the adherents themselves, the authority of the values and principles to which they adhere is precisely *not* perceived as deriving from its importance to them. Quite the reverse: for the adherents, it is the authority of the values that explains why they attach so much importance to them. In seeing the values and principles as important, in other words, they experience themselves as responding to normative ideas with independent authority, and it is this very fact that gives the values and principles their peculiarly important role in the adherents' lives. So a regime of toleration must be sensitive both to the internal role and to the outer-directedness of our normative convictions: both to their internal importance and to their perceived external authority.

The fact that our values and principles have this dual aspect helps to explain why intolerance is both so tempting for its perpetrators and so injurious to its victims. Intolerance is tempting because tolerance, unless justified on purely instrumental grounds, seems to concede authority to values and principles that, by hypothesis, one rejects.[32] Benjamin Kaplan says that, if one surveys the incidents of popular religious violence in early modern Europe, "a striking fact emerges: an extraordinary number of them were triggered by just three types of event: processions, holiday celebrations, and funerals."[33] Kaplan argues that it was the public nature of these events that made them "flashpoints" or triggers for religious violence. Their public character made them potentially explosive partly because, for Europeans of that time, it seemed that

> . . . when a religious group enacted its beliefs in a public space, it was claiming possession not just of that space but of the entire

32. As I have said, I construe tolerance broadly enough that it need not always involve disapproval of the values that are tolerated. Yet I am here supposing that one can tolerate only those values that one rejects, and this may seem inconsistent with a broad construal of tolerance. However, even on the broad construal, one tolerates only those values that one does not oneself accept. In that sense, toleration always involves rejection, even if it does not always involve disapproval. Moreover, it is consistent with the broad construal to hold that intolerance generally becomes more tempting in proportion to the degree that one does disapprove of the relevant values and practices.
33. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

community, appropriating the authority to speak and act for
everyone, and making those of other faiths accomplices in rituals
they rejected or even abhorred.[34]

In other words, intolerance can seem irresistible if one thinks the only
alternative is to concede authority to values one rejects or detests. By
the same token, of course, intolerance is injurious to its victims in part
because they too are, to one degree or another, constrained to defer to
values they reject and to neglect values they accept. The temptations of
intolerance and the injuries it imposes are two sides of the same coin.
Both give evidence of the importance that people attach to the ability
to order their lives with reference to values and principles they regard as
authoritative. And both give evidence of how unbearable it can seem to
concede authority to, let alone to be constrained or compelled to have
one's life regulated by, values and principles that one rejects.

But why exactly should this be so unbearable? The explanation, pre-
sumably, turns on the importance of the functions that normative and
evaluative convictions serve in people's lives. Consider three of the most
significant of these functions. First, our values, principles, and ideals
determine our deliberative priorities, by defining the ends that we think
worth pursuing and the means by which we believe it is acceptable to
pursue those ends. In so doing, they determine the kinds of consider-
ation that we count as reasons for action. Second, our normative and
evaluative convictions define commitments which, although not immu-
table, nevertheless endure over time and provide continuity amid the flux
and contingency of daily experience. In this sense, they help to stabilize
our selves. Finally, these same convictions define what we count as suc-
cess or failure in our lives, and in so doing they shape our self-assessments
and our experience of attitudes such as shame and pride that depend on
those self-assessments.

Given that our normative and evaluative convictions serve these func-
tions, it is not surprising that being prevented from acting in accordance
with values one regards as authoritative, or being constrained to act in
accordance with values that one rejects, should be perceived as a grave
injury. By attacking the deliberative and motivational nexus via which
our values are translated into actions, these forms of interference and
constraint amount to a kind of assault on the self. Depending on their
severity and effectiveness, they may compromise the integrity of our
deliberations and the exercises of our agency, threaten our capacity to

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34. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

lead lives that are successful by our own lights and, in extreme cases, they
may even place in jeopardy the stability of our personalities over time.

In his brilliant critique of utilitarianism, Bernard Williams famously
asked:

> … how can a man, as a utilitarian agent, come to regard as one
> satisfaction among others, and a dispensable one, a project or
> attitude round which he has built his life, just because someone
> else's projects have so structured the causal scene that that is how
> the utilitarian sum comes out?

Answering his own rhetorical question, he continued,

> It is absurd to demand of such a man, when the sums come in
> from the utility network which the projects of others have in part
> determined, that he should just step aside from his own project
> and decision and acknowledge the decision which utilitarian
> calculation requires. It is to alienate him in a real sense from his
> actions and the source of his action in his own convictions. It is to
> make him into a channel between the input of everyone's projects,
> including his own, and an output of optimific decision; but this is
> to neglect the extent to which *his* actions and *his* decisions have to
> be seen as the actions and decisions which flow from the projects
> and attitudes with which he is most closely identified. It is thus,
> in the most literal sense, an attack on his integrity.[35]

Moral philosophers continue to disagree about the force of Williams'
comments considered as an objection to utilitarianism. But it is striking
that the accusation that he levels at utilitarianism in this passage seems
to point precisely to what is most injurious about the effects of intoler-
ance on its victims. By making it difficult or impossible for their actions
and decisions to be seen as flowing from the projects and attitudes with
which they are most closely identified, intolerance is, in the most literal
sense, an attack on their integrity. And if, as I have been arguing, the inju-
ries inflicted by intolerance on its victims are closely related to the tempta-
tions of intolerance for its perpetrators, then it seems to follow that, just
as intolerance threatens the integrity of its victims, so too the perpetrators

35. Bernard Williams, "A Critique of Utilitarianism," in Smart and Williams (eds.),
Utilitarianism For and Against (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press,
1973), pp. 77–150, at pp. 116–117.

of intolerance may perceive a willingness to tolerate others as a threat to their own integrity. In other words, the threat that intolerance poses to the integrity of its victims may be mirrored by the threat that tolerance poses to the integrity of the perpetrators. Although this may sound initially implausible, I believe that it is nevertheless true. As I have already suggested, the problem from the point of view of the perpetrators is that tolerating others, unless it is justified on purely instrumental grounds, seems to concede authority to values and principles which, by hypothesis, they reject. And such concessions may seem to them tantamount to the abandonment of their own values and principles, rendering them complicit in practices and ways of life that they do not accept and may well detest. In this way, the prospect of extending tolerance to others may indeed be perceived as a threat to their integrity.

Moreover, it would be wrong to assume that the perceived threat that tolerance poses to the integrity of the perpetrators is less severe than the threat that intolerance poses to the integrity of its victims. The persecutory zeal with which intolerance is frequently pursued suggests otherwise. And it is worth noting that there is one respect in which the threat to the integrity of the perpetrators may actually be more severe than the threat to the integrity of its victims. The victims are, after all, victims, and if intolerance compromises their ability to order their lives in accordance with values and principles that they accept, that is because of the way they have been treated by others, and not because they themselves have been unfaithful to those values. For the perpetrators, by contrast, any extension of tolerance to others would require a decision to defer to the authority of values and principles that they reject. For that reason, it may seem tantamount to a *betrayal* of their own values, rather than a mere failure to act in accordance with them, and as such a much graver compromise of their integrity.

A natural response to this line of thought is to challenge the claim that extending tolerance to others involves conceding or deferring to the authority of values that one rejects. For the extension of tolerance to other people to make sense, all that is required is that one should accept the legitimacy of *those people's* deferring to the perceived authority of the values and principles that they accept. There is no requirement that, in addition, one must oneself defer to the authority of the same values and principles, nor, therefore, is there any implication that one must abandon or betray one's own values and principles.

But this reply, natural though it is, does not do justice to the complaint of the intolerant. And for the very same reason, as I will later argue, it obscures some of the distinctive value of toleration. The problem, in both cases, is that it understates the extent of the transformation in the relations among citizens that a regime of liberal toleration seeks to accomplish. Absent a regime of toleration, the fact that other people take themselves to have value-based

reasons for acting in certain ways gives me reason to modify my own behavior only insofar as the fact that they see themselves as having those reasons affects my prospects of achieving my aims. But a regime of liberal toleration requires that we treat the claims of others to act on reasons that they perceive as authoritative as providing us with non-instrumental reasons to modify our own behavior. In this way, it requires us to treat the conflicting claims, values, and principles of other people as an independent source of reasons for action for us. That is why liberal tolerance seems paradoxical. How can values that one rejects provide one with (non-instrumental) reasons for action, especially with reasons for modifying conduct that is rooted in values that one accepts? But it is not the paradoxical character of liberal toleration that interests me at the moment. What interests me is the fact that, in requiring us to treat the value-based claims of others as reasons for modifying our own claims and conduct, there is a sense in which a liberal regime does ask us to concede normative authority to the values and principles of others. The lament of the intolerant is, therefore, correct; they are being asked to defer to the authority of values and principles that they reject.

It may be said in reply that what the intolerant are being asked to treat as reason-giving, and in that sense authoritative, are not the actual values and principles of other people. What they are being asked to treat as authoritative is merely the psychological fact that those people attach importance to their values and principles. But this is not quite right either. It is true, of course, that the intolerant are not required to accept the truth of the values and principles that they reject. So there is a kind of authority that they need not concede. It is also true that they are asked to concede authority to values and principles that they reject only insofar as other people do perceive them as authoritative. To put it another way, they are asked to defer to the perceived authority of the values and principles, not to their actual authority. But the intolerant may reasonably protest that deference to the perceived authority of the values involves a kind of normative bootstrapping that makes it tantamount to a grant of actual authority. One may treat the values of other people as reason-giving only because those people perceive them as authoritative, but in so doing one is nevertheless conceding a measure of actual authority to the values. That is, one is treating them as sources of normative reasons that bear on one's own actions. If, for example, an employee's religion declares that a certain day is a holiday which is to be devoted to prayer and reflection, and if the employee asks her employer for the day off so that she can observe the holiday, then the employer is being asked to guide his conduct in light of reasons deriving from the pronouncements of the employee's religion. In this sense, to defer to the perceived authority of the values is to grant them actual authority. That is because what *deference* amounts to in this context is treating the values of others as sources of reasons to act or refrain from acting in certain ways oneself. Granted, the reasons one acknowledges are not the

same as the reasons recognized by the adherents of those values. The adher-
ents see themselves as having reasons to act in ways called for by the values,
that is, to participate in the relevant value-based practices. The tolerant, by
contrast, see themselves as having reasons to accommodate the value-based
practices of the adherents, not to participate in those practices themselves.
The employer, for example, sees himself as having reasons to accommodate
his employee's wish to devote the holiday to prayer and reflection; he does
not see himself as having reasons to engage in prayer and reflection as well.
But the intolerant are not wrong to see even this limited and derivative grant
of authority as implicating them in the values of others, nor are there *a priori*
grounds for insisting that they must be mistaken if they see this as offend-
ing against their own values. So the claim that toleration is a threat to their
integrity cannot be dismissed.

If this is right, and it is not unreasonable for the intolerant to perceive
toleration as a threat to their integrity, then the prospects for a stable
regime of toleration may seem bleak. Echoing Rawls we may say: it seems
remarkable that such a thing is possible at all, and historical experience
suggests that it rarely is.

This is not the end of the story, however. Rare or not, regimes of liberal
toleration have been established and sustained in various societies. Each
of these regimes has been imperfect, but all actual political practices and
institutions are imperfect. What is surprising is not that they have been
imperfect, but that they have been as successful as they have. One aspect
of their success, as I have noted, has been their capacity to attract alle-
giance that is not grounded solely in instrumental considerations. Instead,
many people who experience life under a regime of toleration come to
regard it as an important value in its own right. In the best cases, a virtu-
ous circle takes hold: practices of toleration come to be perceived by those
who are subject to them as intrinsically good or worthy, which helps to
stabilize those practices, and this in turn enhances their capacity to attract
value-based support from those who are subject to them. How, in light of
our discussion, can this possibly happen? If toleration threatens the integ-
rity of those who extend it to others, then why isn't everyone intolerant (at
least insofar as they lack instrumental reasons for tolerance)?

For a certain number of people, at least part of the answer is that they
have some principled conviction that supports toleration and that out-
weighs or defuses the threat. Some are committed to an ideal of auton-
omy, for example, or have a pluralistic understanding of the good, or wish
to cooperate with their fellow citizens on a footing of mutual respect. But
I don't think that this is the whole story, even for people who have such
convictions. Another piece of the explanation is this: the threat to people's
integrity does not always materialize. In fact, rather than compromising

people's integrity, the very features of toleration that are said to pose the threat are responsible for much of what people find rewarding about the practice. That is because many people experience the fact that they are implicated in the values of the other members of their society—that they are participants in a social practice through which each is implicated in the values of the others—not as undermining their own integrity but rather as establishing a bond with their fellow members.

More specifically, the phenomenon of being linked to others through a practice of mutual deference to one another's values is experienced as a form of fraternity: a way of acknowledging, beneath and despite our differences, that we face a common predicament. This may sound like a strange thing to say, given the emphasis I have been placing on the threat posed to individual integrity by precisely this sort of deference. But consider, by way of comparison, actual fraternal relations—relations among siblings. These relations are usually complex and often have a strongly competitive dimension. Nevertheless, fraternal ties are very powerful and have a distinctive and intimate character. One of the reasons for this, I believe, is that siblings (usually) share the unifying experience of mutual subjection to the authority of their parents. This means that, up to a point at least, they face a common predicament, occupy a common perspective, and have common interests, even if these things coexist with more competitive strands in their relationship. Siblings may simultaneously be rivals, allies, and co-conspirators. Underlying all of these strands is the recognition that they share something that nobody else does—a perspective on their parents' exercise of parental authority from the point of view of those who are subject to it. This common perspective helps to give their relationship its peculiarly intimate character, even when, in other respects, their relations are not especially close.

In general, the shared experience of subjection to a common authority is a powerful basis for relations of solidarity. Many other forms of comradeship and solidarity, in addition to those among siblings, are also forged on this basis. Think, for example, of the relations among students in a classroom, soldiers in a military unit, or workers in a manufacturing plant. In each case, there is room for competition, rivalry, and even dislike—indeed, the full range of human interpersonal attitudes is available to the members of these groups. But, in addition, there is this: a tendency to solidarity deriving from the shared experience of living together under a common authority.

Obviously, we are not all siblings or comrades, and there is (for now) no common human authority to whom we are all subject. So when I say that there is a form of fraternity associated with participation in a regime of toleration, I do not mean to suggest that the model of siblings and comrades carries over straightforwardly to this case. However, although we are not all

subject to a common authority, we are all subject to the idea of authority. That is, we must all confront the normative dimension of human experience. We all live in the shadow of norms, principles, reasons, and ideals that, rightly or wrongly, we regard as authoritative. And although our values vary, the experience of responding to normative authority—of trying to be guided by values and norms that we accept—is part of our common experience. And this too makes possible a form of solidarity—a form of solidarity that derives from the shared experience of subjection, not to a common authority figure, but to normativity or authority itself.

It is in this spirit, I believe, that the adherents of different religions sometimes feel a sense of solidarity with one another as participants in the common enterprise of responding to ideas of the sacred or the divine. More generally, the adherents of different values and ideals sometimes recognize one another as participants in the shared human enterprise of trying to live a good or worthy life—that is, of trying to live in accordance with norms and ideals that one perceives as authoritative. I say that they sometimes recognize one another as participants in a common enterprise, not that they must do so or that they always do so. To the contrary, this unifying form of recognition is easily blocked or disabled by any of the numerous factors that give the differences and divisions among people their salience. However, I believe that a regime of toleration, by enforcing the kind of mutual deference to one another's values that I have been describing, encourages such recognition. Indeed, it does more. It gives concrete social expression to a compelling but abstract idea: the idea of an otherwise diverse people who are united by the common experience of confronting the normative or evaluative dimension of human life. In addition, it demands that we relate to one another in a way that acknowledges this bond that unites us. And when we do relate to one another in that way, the experience—for many—is one of fraternity or solidarity with one's fellows.[36] To the extent that that experience is rewarding, toleration comes to be seen as valuable in its own right. In

36. There may seem to be a tension between these ideas and the skepticism about "relational" views of morality expressed in "Morality and Reasonable Partiality," Chapter 2 in this volume. However, the skepticism expressed in that paper concerned the possibility that moral reasons in general might be understood as arising from some valuable ongoing relationship in which all human beings are participants. The common experience of confronting the normative dimension of human life, which I emphasize here, is not itself an ongoing relationship of that kind. Instead, my argument has been that recognition of this shared experience can sometimes encourage the development of relationships of fraternity or solidarity, although it does not do so automatically or universally. I am indebted to Nandi Theunissen for raising this issue.

this way, a regime of toleration that is initially accepted on purely instrumental grounds may begin gradually to attract value-based support and may come over time to be seen as intrinsically worthy. What began as a *modus vivendi* is transformed into a valued way of life.

The rewards characteristically afforded by this way of life might be called the rewards of openness to the other. For some people, the most important of these rewards lies in the sense of enrichment that comes from developing an appreciation for forms of value that are realized in practices other than one's own. Other people simply find it exhilarating to live confidently amidst the whirl of human diversity. For still other people, there are subversive and transgressive pleasures afforded by engagement with unfamiliar customs and practices. What underlies all of these rewards—what makes them available to the participants in a regime of toleration—is the kind of fraternity that is expressed in and realized by the practice of mutual deference to one another's values. And for people who experience and appreciate the rewards associated with that practice, its value ceases to be purely instrumental.

There is, once again, no necessity in any of this. Intolerance persists in liberal societies. Some people who are subject to a regime of toleration continue to find it not rewarding but threatening, all the more so because it asks us to acknowledge what we have in common with those who are different. The most toxic and extreme forms of intolerance almost always involve ideas of purity and separateness that rest precisely on a denial of this commonality. A regime of liberal toleration does not make these ideas disappear. It merely offers an alternative, and displays the charms of that alternative for those who are susceptible to seeing them.

So my claim is that, for some people at least, participation in a practice of mutual deference to one another's values is experienced as a good—as a kind of fraternity—rather than as compromising one's ability to translate one's own values into action. This may give rise to two related worries.
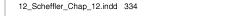
First, if one does experience participation in a practice of mutual deference as a good, then it seems that deference to the values of others is itself among one's own values, in which case it does not really amount to deference to the values of *others* at all. Second, if one experiences toleration as a good, then it is not clear that there is room left to take a critical perspective on the values and practices of others. To the extent that one experiences deference to those values and principles as a good, is it still possible coherently to criticize them? Or does the good of toleration require one to forfeit or disable one's critical faculties?

The answers to both worries turn on the point that, insofar as participation in a practice of mutual deference helps to realize a distinctive value, it is a second-order value: a value associated with deference to the (first-order)

values of others. The fact that a person experiences this kind of deference as a good implies that the second-order value is one of that person's values, but not that the first-order values are. So, in reply to the first worry, the deference is still deference to the values of *others*. And, in reply to the second worry, it is *deference* to the values of others that is experienced as a good; the values themselves may leave one cold, and one may have all kinds of critical reservations about them. Of course, as one's reservations about a particular set of values become increasingly strong, one's conviction that deference to those values is a good may weaken, and at the limit one may decide that they should not be tolerated at all. The practice of toleration, or mutual deference, has its limits. Within those limits, however, what is experienced as good is deference to first-order values other than one's own, and the fact that the values are not one's own already implies that one's attitudes toward them fall short of endorsement. I take it that, in addition, one's attitudes may go beyond mere non-endorsement and may be critical to varying degrees as well. The bond of fraternity, like the bonds of love and friendship, can hold among people who are in various respects critical of one another. Were that not so, the world would be even more deficient in love, friendship, and fraternity than it already is.

This last point seems relevant to the paradox of suppressed disapproval. In effect, that paradox questions the justification for allowing people to act in ways that are themselves unjustified. In other words, it represents it as mysterious that we should have compelling reasons to allow others to engage in practices that we believe there to be compelling reasons to avoid. Why don't the reasons against performing the relevant actions translate into reasons against allowing them to be performed? Although the line of thought I have been developing does not directly address this question about reasons and justification, it does suggest a slightly different way of thinking about the supposed paradox. In particular, it invites us to consider the kinds of relationships that people who disagree about reasons for action may nevertheless establish and sustain among themselves, and to assess the value of those relationships. This relational focus contrasts with the emphasis, in the paradox as formulated, on the respective reasons for action of the tolerant and the tolerated, considered in isolation from one another. Similarly, the focus on the good of toleration shifts attention away from questions of reasons and justification toward questions about the human rewards of living under a regime of toleration. There is no paradox in the idea that people may establish ties of solidarity in the face of disagreement, no paradox in experiencing such ties as valuable and rewarding, and no paradox in the observation that a practice of mutual deference to one another's judgments about values may express and facilitate relations of fraternity and solidarity.

I do not want to exaggerate either the force or the significance of the argument I have been developing. As I have tried to make clear, I am not so naïvely optimistic as to suppose that everyone who lives under a regime of toleration will experience it as rewarding in the ways that I have described. It is always a mistake to underestimate the powerful forces that tempt people to intolerance, and nothing in my argument should be taken to encourage this mistake. I have tried only to call attention to the fact that some people do experience toleration as a good in its own right. That fact—surprising enough in its way—marks the limit both of my optimism and of my argument.

Similarly, I do not claim that the value of toleration as I have described it provides the primary justification for toleration as a practice. Instead, I am inclined to believe, with Rawls and Williams, that there are many different strands of conviction that support the practice of toleration, and that that very fact is important both for its stability and for its justification.[37] My point, in describing the "good of toleration," has been merely to highlight one significant strand that seems to me to have been unduly neglected.

Finally, I do not mean to suggest that, if one does experience toleration as a good, then support for the practice follows automatically. To the contrary, for those who appreciate the good of toleration, a new problem arises, namely, the problem of reconciling that good with their other values and commitments. To one degree or another, toleration may put their other values at risk. By the same token, their other values may make their commitment to toleration precarious. So a complete discussion of this subject, which is more than I can undertake here, would have to consider the interactions between the good of toleration, as I have characterized it, and the other values to which a person who experiences that good may be committed.[38]

Nevertheless, the considerations about the good of toleration to which I have tried to call attention in this essay seem to me significant. We are

37. To the extent that Williams believes that autonomy represents the only moral or value-based source of support for the practice, however, my position clearly differs from his.
38. This issue is important for another reason. I have said that toleration poses a threat to the integrity of the tolerant, because it requires them to concede authority to values that they reject. However, I have also said that this threat does not always materialize, and that many people experience participation in a regime of toleration as making possible a valuable form of fraternity rather than as compromising their integrity. In saying this, I mean not merely that they do not think that their integrity has been compromised but that it has not actually been compromised. However, this may seem mysterious. If conceding authority to values that one rejects threatens one's integrity, then how does the fact that it also makes possible valuable relations with other people cause the threat to disappear? After all, even if one experiences those relations as rewarding, it

accustomed to thinking of toleration as being, so to speak, a remedial value or practice: one that is concerned with controlling one's own disapproval or managing disagreement and conflict. Understood in this way, it may seem equivalent to a more or less grudging forbearance. Now a regime of toleration does require us to control our disapproval in many contexts, and it surely *is* a way of managing disagreement and minimizing destructive conflict. Moreover, as we have seen, these dimensions of toleration generate genuine puzzles and paradoxes, and the interest that these puzzles understandably attract tends to reinforce our sense of toleration as a remedial value.

My aim, however, has been to call attention to another dimension of toleration, in which it appears not so much as remedial but rather as facilitating social relations of a distinctive and distinctively attractive kind. It is a rare piece of political good fortune that, in their efforts to defuse violent sectarian conflict, liberal societies have hit upon a way of organizing themselves that makes possible its own intrinsic rewards and satisfactions. This does not make the puzzles and paradoxes disappear, but it may help to explain the intensity with which many people remain committed to toleration despite those puzzles and paradoxes.

Acknowledgments

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remains the case that, in tolerating others, one is conceding authority to values that one rejects. So why isn't one's integrity compromised? The answer presumably depends on a point noted earlier, namely, that for someone who experiences toleration as a good, the second-order value of deference to the first-order values of others takes its place within one's own repertoire of values. This in turn makes it easier to reconcile the concession of authority to first-order values that one rejects with loyalty to one's own system of values. Still, the extent to which this succeeds in eliminating the threat to one's integrity will depend on how easy it is to reconcile the second-order value itself with one's other values, and that in turn will depend, *inter alia*, on the content of those other values. I am grateful to Macalester Bell for raising this question.