

Entitlement and Mutually Recognized Reasonable Disagreement

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A plurality of reasonable yet incompatible comprehensive doctrines is the normal result of the exercise of human reason.

— John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*

In this paper I propose a relativistic version of entitlement theory (§2) and argue that this vindicates naïve liberalism (§1): the view that there can be mutually recognized reasonable disagreements in religion and politics. I describe the conditions for mutually recognized reasonable disagreement (§3), and consider some objections to the proposed view (§4).

1 Naïve liberalism

Richard Feldman (2007) describes a common sense epistemological view, held by most of his students in a course on religion:

Although a wide variety of different religious views were represented in the class ... almost all the students had a great deal of respect for the views of the others. They “agreed to disagree” and concluded that “reasonable people can disagree” about the issues under discussion. (p. 194)

What Feldman’s students thought was that “while they had their own beliefs, the others had reasonable beliefs as well.” (p. 200) And Feldman rightly points out that this view is “widespread” in the contemporary world. This liberal epistemological view, in other words, is a piece of contemporary common sense, at least in societies where political liberalism holds sway. Here is a sympathetic formulation:

Naïve liberalism: Some ordinary religious and political disagreements are (or could become) mutually recognized reasonable disagreements.¹

First, note that naïve liberalism is committed to the possibility of *mutually recognized* reasonable disagreement. It is a corollary of naïve liberalism that some ordinary religious and political disagreements are (or could become) reasonable disagreements. But naïve liberalism says more: it says that the parties to certain reasonable disagreements can sometimes come to recognize each other’s reasonableness. Second, note that we concern ourselves with *ordinary* religious and political disagreements. I mean the kind of religious and political disagreements with which we are familiar in our non-academic lives; the kind of disagreements that almost everyone (not just academics) living under political liberalism has been a party to. Third, we are concerned with disagreement in belief, and in particular we shall confine ourselves to cases in which one person believes

¹ [Compare my articulation of naïve liberalism in “Higher-Order Epistemic Attitudes and Intellectual Humility,” forthcoming in *Episteme*, which employs the notion of an “epistemic peer.” This articulation is superior in that it avoids appeal to that controversial notion; cf. §4.4.]

p and another believes $\sim p$. Fourth, for this reason, our formulation is confined to *religious and political* disagreements. It's scope could possibly be expanded; but we shall bracket moral disagreements (because they are less obviously disagreements in belief) and philosophical disagreements (because it is not obvious that philosophers believe the views that they advance, nor is it especially intuitive that they ought to believe the views that they advance).

Feldman wonders "what this respectful and tolerant attitude can sensibly amount to," (2007, p. 194, p. 198) and argues that naïve liberalism is false (2006, pp. 222-35), 2007, pp. 204-10. My aim here is to defend naïve liberalism; my strategy will be to appeal to a relativistic version of entitlement theory (§2) and show how this vindicates the possibility of mutually recognized reasonable disagreement (§3).

We must say something about the relevant notion of *reasonable belief*. Feldman sets aside a number of senses of "reasonable" that are distinct from the relevant sense. For example, we are not using "reasonable" in any of the following senses:

- (1) S's belief that p is reasonable iff S is a generally reasonable person (2006, p. 220, 2007, p. 204).
- (2) S's belief that p is reasonable iff S "is not being flagrantly unreasonable" (2007, p. 202) or "crazy" (2006, p. 221) in believing p.
- (3) S's belief that p is reasonable iff S's belief that p has "practical" or "prudential or moral" value (2006, p. 221) or if S's belief that p is "prudentially or practically ... reasonable." (2007, p. 203).

So in connection with (iii), the relevant notion of reasonable belief is that of **epistemically** reasonable belief (more on which below, §4.2).

Like Feldman, we will not offer a definition of the notion of reasonable belief. We can make three notes of clarification, however. First, we will take the relevant notion to be **deontological**. To say that S's belief that p is reasonable is to say that S is permitted to believe p, and to say that S's belief that p is unreasonable is to say that S ought not believe p. This assumption – that reasonableness is deontological – is standard in the literature on the epistemology of disagreement: Feldman (2007) writes that "one *should* give up one's beliefs in the light of the sort of disagreement under discussion" (p. 213 and passim), David Christensen (2007) asks "[h]ow *should* I react when I discover that my friend and I have different beliefs on the same topic?" (p. 188, see also his 2009a, p. 231, and 2009b), Roger White (2005) discusses the issue of whether my "conviction *should* be undermined" in various cases (2005, p. 450, and passim, using throughout the language of "permission" and "obligation") and elsewhere says that "it appears that I *ought* to be very skeptical of much of what I believe" (2009, p. 234 and passim), and Thomas Kelly writes that his issue is "how an awareness of disagreement *should* effect our beliefs" (2005, p. 171 and passim), and asks "how (if at all) *should* we revise our original views?" (2010, p. 112 and passim).

Second, the relevant notion is an **internalist** notion. What I mean by "internalist" here can be illustrated by noting that we are not using "reasonable" in the following "externalist" sense:

- (4) S's belief that p reasonable iff "S's believing p ... results from a reliable cognitive belief-forming process (or set of processes)." (Goldman 1979, p. 97)

Compare what Alvin Plantinga (2000) calls “external rationality”: the property of resulting from a properly functioning set of cognitive mechanisms (pp. 110-3, see also Bergmann 2009). Is our use of an internalist notion of reasonable belief legitimate? We should be guided here by the aim of providing a sympathetic and charitable articulation of the common sense epistemological view described by Feldman. The naïve liberal thinks that it's possible for two people to reasonably disagree. Suppose we have such a case: Jill believes p and Ted believes $\sim p$. What's the naïve liberal's view? That both Jill's belief and Ted's belief are true? That's incoherent; if we can avoid attributing such incoherence, we should. That Jill knows p and Ted knows $\sim p$? Again, not coherent when “knows” is factive. That Jill's formed her belief in a reliable way and Ted formed his belief in a reliable way? Perhaps. But the naïve liberal also thinks that some reasonable disagreements could become mutually recognized reasonable disagreements. Is it plausible to think that Jill and Ted could think that both their beliefs were formed in a reliable way, and yet reasonably continue to believe p and $\sim p$, respectively? As Feldman argues (2006, pp. 233-5), this is not plausible. But this speaks against articulating naïve liberalism by appeal to an externalist notion of reasonable belief. For we seek a notion of reasonable belief that will enable us to make sense of naïve liberalism, one that will allow us to vindicate this common sense epistemological view.

Third, the relevant notion of reasonable belief is not the same as the notion of **blameless belief**. Blamelessness is not sufficient for reasonable belief, in the relevant sense of “reasonable belief.” Consider:

No reliabilist is a coherentist, and only externalists are reliabilists. From this, Christine concludes that no coherentist is an externalist. But it's not her fault: she's just drunk 12 pints of strong lager. She blamelessly believes that no coherentist is an externalist, but her belief is not reasonable.

Following Feldman, I take the notion of reasonable belief to be an intuitive one, once these clarifications have been made. Better: I take the notion to be intuitive enough to proceed; in the next section (§2.1) I'll propose a controversial claim about reasonable belief.

A final clarification on our articulation of naïve liberalism. Note well that the view does not maintain that disagreement never requires suspension of judgment. Suppose that Paddy and Roddy are discussing football when it becomes clear that they aren't on the same page when it comes to the outcome of last night's match: Paddy remembers reading that Hibs won; Roddy remembers reading that Hearts won. Intuitively, they should suspend judgment about the outcome of the match. So naïve liberalism is not equivalent to the view that you generally ought to be “steadfast” or to “stick to your guns” in response to disagreement. An appealing feature of the account defended here is that it will explain the conditions for mutually recognized reasonable disagreement (§3.2), and thus explain the difference between cases in which mutually recognized reasonable disagreement is possible and those in which such disagreement does not seem possible (e.g. the case of Paddy and Roddy).

2 Relativistic entitlement theory

This section proposes (§2.1) and defends (§§2.2 – 2.3) a relativistic version of entitlement theory. Related theories have been defended by Crispin Wright (2004a, 2004b) and Michael Williams (1996), and suggested by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1969) and Thomas Reid (in his 1785 *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*).

2.1 Entitlement to trust

First, we'll define the notion of "entitlement to trust a source of information." Second, we'll say something about the connection between entitlement to trust and reasonable belief.

In general, the sources of information I trust will make a difference when it comes to how I respond to a piece of evidence. Someone **trusts a source of information** when she is disposed to form beliefs on the basis of that source, i.e. if she is disposed, other things being equal, to believe p when the source says that p (in a broad sense of "says"). Whether I take e to be evidence that p , and, if I do, how strongly I think e supports p , will depend significantly on the sources of information I trust. The horoscope for Pisces in today's issue of *The Sun* says: "You will amaze people as the moon reveals the hidden side of your personality." Someone who trusts astrological predictions will be disposed to treat this as evidence that I *will* amaze people as the moon reveals the hidden side of my personality. Someone who puts no stock in astrological predictions will not be so disposed.

It seems that trusting a source of information can be warranted or unwarranted. It would be irrational for me to trust astrological predictions, as I have much evidence that they are unreliable (e.g. from their poor track-record), as well as much evidence against the theories from which they are derived (e.g. from the inconsistency of astrology with our best current scientific theories). At least for this reason, were I to trust astrological predictions, my trust would be unwarranted.²

Trusting a source of information seems warranted *if* you have evidence that favors its reliability. But is such evidential support necessary for warranted trust? The theory we seek to articulate here says that evidential support is not necessary for warranted trust. It is based on Wittgenstein's idea that "some propositions are exempt from doubt" and "are as it were like hinges on which [our doubts] turn." (1969, §341) Developing this idea, Wright (2004a, pp. 188-97, 2004b) argues that we are *entitled* to some beliefs, namely, those:

whose rejection would rationally necessitate extensive reorganisation of – or more, might even just throw into confusion – our highly complex conception of what kind of thing should be taken as evidence for what kind of proposition. (2004b, pp. 41-2)

Beliefs of this kind will have as their content "presuppositions" of our "cognitive projects," where:

p is a *presupposition* of a particular cognitive project if to doubt p (in advance) would rationally commit one to doubting the significance or competence of the project. (2004a, p. 191)

Such presuppositions are what Williams (1996) calls the "methodological necessities" for a given species of inquiry (p. 123). Entitlement, for Wright, involves non-evidential warrant: I'm permitted to believe p despite lacking evidence that p is true. And the reason that I'm permitted to do so is that doing otherwise would throw into confusion

² I use "warrant" here for convenience and to avoid confusion: belief is reasonable or not reasonable; trust in a source is warranted or not warranted.

my conception of what counts as evidence for what. That's the idea I want to take away from Wright; if this idea is credible, then so is the following idea: that I am permitted to trust a source of information if not trusting it would cut me off from a significant body of true beliefs. If it's plausible that we're entitled to believe the "methodological necessities" of our cognitive projects, because doubting these propositions would undermine those projects, then we are likewise entitled to trust sources of information that we need to get at the truth in various domains.³ If the threat of confusion can generate entitlement to believe some proposition, as Wright argues, then the threat of being cut off from the truth can generate entitlement to trust some source of information.

Let's articulate this idea. We'll say that S is **entitled to trust** a source of information F, at t, iff

- (i) not trusting F would result in S losing access to a significant body of (from S's perspective at t) true beliefs,
- (ii) S doesn't have sufficient reason to believe that F is unreliable (call this the **open question condition on entitlement to trust**), and
- (iii) S has neither viciously avoided acquiring evidence that F is unreliable nor viciously sought to acquire evidence that F is reliable (call this the **no vice condition on entitlement to trust**).

A more elaborate formulation would be required to speak of entitlement to trust one source to a greater degree than another, but we'll stick with the simpler formulation. Entitlement to trust a source of information, at a particular time, is defined in terms of a person's losing access to a body beliefs that appear true from her perspective, at that time. A proposition p is **true from S's perspective** at t iff, at t, S believes p (or would believe p immediately upon reflection).

What is the relationship between entitlement to trust and **reasonable belief**? Our theory maintains the following:

Claim: It is sometimes reasonable for someone S to believe some proposition p, in virtue of the fact that S is entitled to trust some source of information F and the fact that F says that p.

We will assume an **open question condition on reasonable belief**, analogous to the open question condition on entitlement to trust: reasonable belief that p requires that one not have sufficient reason to believe $\sim p$. We will also assume an **no vice condition on reasonable belief**, analogous to the no vice condition on entitlement to trust. At least in some cases, a history of vicious formation precludes a belief from being reasonable. Consider a case of biased inquiry: John has a prejudicial belief that women are bad at sports, and seeks out evidence that women are bad at sports, while actively avoiding the acquisition of evidence against this claim. John may end up in possession of strong evidence that women are bad at sports, but his prejudicial belief is still unreasonable, given its history of vicious formation. Alternatively, consider a case of vicious lack of inquiry: people keep pointing out that my understanding of Aristotle is completely mistaken, and that I really need to sit down and read his work, but I refuse, and continue to hold on to my misinterpretation. Reasonable belief may require not only

³ On Wright's view, entitlement attaches to propositions or to token beliefs. On the view proposed here, it attaches to instances of trust.

that the inquiries upon which my belief is based be conducted in a non-vicious fashion, but also that my belief is not sustained by my vicious refusal to inquire.

Wright (2004a) requires, for entitlement to believe some presupposition, that there be no independent way to justify such belief (pp. 191-2). In our formulation, we have not included an analogue of Wright's requirement: that there be no F-independent way of assessing the reliability of F. We have required only that S not have not viciously avoided inquiring into a source's reliability. Now if there is no F-independent way of assessing the reliability of F, surely no one is epistemically vicious for failing to seek independent assessment of F's reliability. But our formulation leaves open the possibility that someone might enjoy entitlement to trust a source of information, without inquiring after its reliability, even if such inquiry is possible, so long as she has not been epistemically vicious in failing to so inquire. The motivating idea for the present theory is still present: you're entitled to trust a source of information when not trusting it would be (from your perspective) epistemically disastrous. One might have *greater* right to rely on a source F when there is no F-independent way of assessing the reliability of F (although it's not obvious why this would be so), but perceived bad epistemic consequences are sufficient to generate some degree of entitlement. Note also that our motivations for accepting the proposed theory would (§2.3) stand, even absent the stronger requirement.

Our "theory" about reasonable belief is modest: it does not purport to give necessary and sufficient conditions for warranted trust in general, nor for reasonable belief. Thus the possibility of other form of warranted trust, other than entitlement to trust, is left open, as is the possibility of other sources of reasonable belief.

According to clause (i), S is entitled to trust F, at t, only if not trusting F would result in S losing access to a significant body of (from S's perspective at t) true beliefs.⁴ You might wonder why we didn't opt for the simpler:

- (i*) not trusting F would result in S losing access to a significant body of true beliefs.

We might then connect entitlement to trust with reasonable belief. But the resulting notion of reasonable belief would not differ from what we articulated at (4), above: it would be an externalist notion of reasonable belief. The notion we seek is internalist. More on this below (§2.3), and on the worry that the present notion of reasonable belief is "subjective" (§4.1).

2.2 An objection forestalled

You might have worried that entitlement to trust is fairly easy to come by. For example, not trusting astrological prediction would result in the committed astrologer losing access to a significant body of (from her perspective) true beliefs. So it might seem that the committed astrologer is entitled to trust astrological prediction, and might in virtue of that come to reasonably believe the deliverances of astrological prediction. And you might think that "anyone who believes in astrology believes in something that is simply indefensible." (van Inwagen 1996, p. 141, see also Feldman 2007, p. 211) The problem here is the apparent licensing of dogmatism or conservatism: just in virtue of being

⁴ Note that we relativize to S's perspective at t. What is relevant in determining entitlement to trust, at present, is whether the beliefs lost would be true, from S's current perspective; not whether those beliefs would be true from what S's perspective would be in that counterfactual situation.

committed to astrology, the astrologer's beliefs would count as reasonable. The defender of our entitlement theory can make four replies.

First, given the open question condition on entitlement to trust, the astrologer is not entitled to trust astrological prediction unless she lacks reason to believe that astrological prediction is unreliable. As I argued above (§2.1), I presently have evidence – its poor track-record and its incompatibility with contemporary science – that gives me sufficient reason to believe that astrological prediction is unreliable. Any astrologer with sufficient reason to believe that astrological prediction is unreliable is not entitled to trust astrological prediction. But most contemporary proponents of astrology do have such sufficient reason.

Second, given the no vice condition on entitlement to trust, the astrologer is not entitled to trust astrological prediction unless she has not been epistemically vicious in her acquisition of evidence relevant to the reliability of astrological prediction. Today's *Daily Mail* advises Sagittarians that “[t]he eclipse in your opposite sign heralds a decisive drama.” Suppose, however, that for Sagittarians no “decisive drama” ensues. The committed astrologer might explain this away by creatively interpreting the course of events: the lack of drama of course *was* the drama, or some such nonsense. But this manifestation of epistemically vicious bias undermines entitlement to trust.

Third, given the open question condition on reasonable belief, our theory will never imply that it is reasonable for someone to believe something she has sufficient reason to believe is false, *pace* some critics of entitlement theories of reasonable belief (Brueckner 2007; cf. Wright on predicting horse races with dice, 2004a, p. 195).

Fourth, recall the no vice condition on reasonable belief. The astrologer for the *Daily Star* maintains that I have been “getting [my] finances in order over the last few months.” But you might think that anyone who believed this had (for example) viciously avoided inquiring about my finances. To believe that people born in late February and early March have in general recently gotten their finances in order, without seeking out the available evidence on such matters, would manifest a willful and epistemically vicious refusal to inquire when inquiry is called for.

However, note well that our theory places no a priori restriction on the contents of propositions that might be reasonably believed in virtue of entitlement to trust. One encounters the idea that some beliefs – e.g. an astrological worldview – are unreasonable simply in virtue of their “absurd” or “crazy” content. The present theory rejects this idea (cf. §4.1). But it doesn't implausibly vindicate dogmatism or conservatism.

Our theory is a form of **relativism about reasonable belief**.⁵ The sources of information I am entitled to trust will make a difference when it comes to what it is reasonable for me to believe. This is what will allow us to say something (§3.1) about the possibility of mutually recognized reasonable disagreements.⁶

⁵ Cf. MacFarlane 2005, Boghossian 2006, White 2007. The present theory captures some of the spirit of views that relativize reasonable belief to “frameworks,” “frames,” “worlds,” “conceptual schemes,” “ways of life,” and so on. Relativism about reasonable belief is consistent with absolutism about knowledge, if one takes the question of whether S's belief that p is reasonable to be orthogonal to the question of whether S's belief that p amounts to knowledge.

⁶ On Wright's (2004a) view, a cognitive project must be “indispensable, or anyway sufficiently valuable to us” for its presuppositions to enjoy entitlement (Ibid. p. 192). The letter of Wright's view seems neutral

2.3 Motivations for the theory

Why accept this relativistic entitlement theory of reasonable belief (§2.1)? First, the present theory, like entitlement theories in general, vindicates a certain kind of anti-skeptical strategy. The skeptical argument challenges the permissibility of trusting perception, for example, by pointing out that we are not in possession of evidence that favors the reliability of perception: we have no evidence that rules out the possibility that perception is unreliable (e.g. because we are deceived by a demon), and even the evidence we do have, in favor of the reliability of perception, itself comes from perception – which seems a dubious source to appeal to in defense of the reliability of perception. Entitlement theory allows us to see why we are permitted to trust perception, in spite of all of this. Now the entitlement theorist need not maintain that other anti-skeptical strategies are unable to resolve this problem, by showing that we are, in the end, justified in believing the deliverances of perception. But two things speak in favor of the entitlement theorist’s strategy. The first is that entitlement theory allows us to see immediately why we are permitted to trust perception, even when we have no response to the skeptical challenge. The second is that entitlement theory does justice to some of the intuitions that motivate the skeptical argument, by conceding that our warrant for trusting perception is “unearned,” i.e. not based on evidence. Thus entitlement theory allows us to see why the problem of skepticism moves us, while at the same time vindicating our refusal to be swayed by the skeptical argument.

Second, recall (§1) that we seen a notion of reasonable belief that will enable us to make sense of naïve liberalism. We will see (§3.1) that our relativistic entitlement theory vindicates naïve liberalism; since naïve liberalism is a common sense epistemological view, this speaks in favor of our relativistic entitlement theory. Compare those defenses of reasonable disagreement (Kelly 2005) that do *not* vindicate naïve liberalism. Our theory, in other words, provides us with the sense of “reasonable belief” that we sought, in trying to make sense of naïve liberalism.⁷

Third, the appeal of our relativistic entitlement theory can be bolstered by considering our permission to break moral rules. It is permissible to do something, that would otherwise be impermissible, when doing otherwise is perceived to have sufficiently bad consequences. This view is attractive in the moral domain. There is a moral rule that prohibits lying, but one is sometimes morally permitted, or even morally required, to lie when the perceived (morally relevant) consequences of not lying would be sufficiently bad. As Mill put it, the rule against lying:

between a relativistic and a non-relativistic understanding of indispensability and value. One non-relativistic option is **transcendental entitlement theory**, on which a cognitive project generates entitlement only if its legitimacy is a priori necessary for theoretical rationality to be possible in the first place. Every theoretical reasoner, on this view, will enjoy the same entitlements to believe. Our entitlement theory (§2.1) is **empirical** by contrast: entitlement to trust depends on contingent facts about individual believers, viz. what is true from their perspective; where Wright takes the connection between a presupposition and a species of inquiry to be logical (doubt would “rationally necessitate” confusion), we take it to be empirical (failure to trust would actually lead to lost access to perceived truth); transcendental entitlement theory places an a priori constraint on the cognitive projects that can generate entitlement, while our theory places no such restriction. On our relativistic theory, entitlement is relativized to individual perspectives, and thus in principle different people could have different entitlements to trust (§3.1, cf. Pritchard 2000, p. 132).

⁷ This motivation speaks against requiring, for entitlement to trust a source F, that there be no F-independent way of assessing the reliability of F. The sources of information relevant to ordinary disagreements (§3.1) do not meet this requirement.

admits of possible exceptions ... when the withholding of some fact (as of information from a malefactor, or of bad news from a person dangerously ill) would save an individual ... from great and unmerited evil. (*Utilitarianism*, p. 23)

Our empirical entitlement theory (§2.3) applies this idea to the epistemic domain. We can imagine that there is an epistemic rule prohibiting trusting a source of information without antecedent or independent evidence of its reliability. Our theory says that one is epistemically permitted to break this rule when the perceived (epistemically relevant) consequences of not breaking it would be sufficiently bad.

We have spoken of entitlement to trust a source of information as an (epistemic) *permission*. One might be (epistemically) *required* to trust a source of information, if the perceived (epistemically relevant) consequences of not trusting that source would be bad enough. But we will continue to focus on entitlement to trust (which is all we need to vindicate naïve liberalism), leaving open the possibility of requirements to trust sources of information.

You might argue that the proposed idea is *not* attractive in the moral domain, because what is actually attractive in the moral domain is the view that it is permissible to do something, that would otherwise be impermissible, when doing otherwise *will actually have* sufficiently bad consequences. If this is the idea that is actually attractive in the moral domain, then we ought to replace clause (i), in our definition of entitlement to trust, with (i*), as considered above (§2.1). But we should not opt for this more demanding requirement. Imagine that my Jewish friends are hiding in my cellar. When the Gestapo come to my door, asking if there are any Jews hiding in my cellar, I lie. My lie is morally permissible, even morally required, because not lying, in this situation, would lead to my friends being killed. But now imagine a similar case, but where the men at my door are actually philanthropists in disguise, distributing toys for Jewish children. Because they're wearing Nazi uniforms, I lie and say there are no Jews hiding in my cellar. Is my lie in this case not morally permitted, or not morally required, because my lying doesn't actually save any lives? Is it not morally permitted because its actual consequence is that the children are deprived of toys? We should conclude that what matters, when it comes to permissions to break rules, is perceived consequences, not actual consequences.

There is room for a notion of moral rightness and wrongness that is sensitive to actual consequences, rather than perceived consequences. And there may be a sense of "permitted" in which I am not morally permitted to break a moral rule unless it will actually prevent something sufficiently bad from happening.⁸ Likewise, there is room for a notion of moral rightness and wrongness that is insensitive to the beliefs, intentions, and motivations of the agent, on which moral rightness and wrongness are entirely determined by actual consequences. But there is a notion of moral permission on which I am permitted to break a moral rule in virtue of the perceived bad consequences of not lying – this is the notion that provides the sense in which I am permitted to lie to the philanthropist in disguise, above. And it is this notion that our theory proposes to apply to the epistemic domain.

3 Mutually recognized reasonable disagreement

⁸ It may also be the case that I am never morally *required* to break a moral rule unless not breaking said rule will have sufficiently bad consequences. It may be the case that there is no sense in which I am morally *required* to lie to the philanthropist in disguise, because lying will not *actually* save lives. But there is clearly a sense in which I am morally *permitted* to lie, in that case.

We'll proceed on the assumption that our relativistic entitlement theory about reasonable belief is true. If this assumption is right, naïve liberalism can be vindicated.

3.1 A case of mutually recognized reasonable disagreement

Let us first describe a case of mutually recognized reasonable disagreement. Julia and Maria were raised in, and continue to be members of, different communities: Julia belongs to a community of Roman Catholics; Maria belongs to a community of secular humanists. Julia and Maria's **membership** in their respective communities comes down to various logistical, emotional, and cognitive relationships with other people. Julia spends much of her time with other Catholics, her extended family and her intimate friends are Catholics, and she puts a high degree of trust in their testimony, i.e. she is disposed to believe what they believe. Julia spends much of her time with other humanists, her extended family and her intimate friends are humanists, and she puts a high degree of trust in their testimony, i.e. she is disposed to believe what they believe. One outcome of their having been raised in different communities is that Julia and Maria have incompatible **worldviews**: an interconnected set of beliefs about metaphysics and ethics. Julia is a theist, believes that God sometimes miraculously intervenes in human affairs, takes the Christian bible to have significant authority on moral matters, trusts the testimony of priests as her church, and so on. Maria is an atheist, believes that miracles never happen, rejects the moral authority of the bible, distrusts the testimony of said priests, and so on.

Imagine further that Julia and Maria's worldviews are **inherited** from their communities. What I mean by this is that the best explanation of why Julia and Maria have their different worldviews is their historical and ongoing membership in their respective communities. We should not assume a fortiori that their worldviews are unreasonable; we have said something about the causes of Julia and Maria's beliefs, but this alone does not threaten the reasonableness of their beliefs. But the source of Julia and Maria's worldviews is largely the testimony of their respective communities. Both of them have subjected their worldview to critical scrutiny (at college, say), but each found the arguments against her view, and in favor of incompatible views, unconvincing. The case is therefore not a case of religious disagreement involving religious experience or the *sensus divinitatis* (e.g. one person has had some religious truth revealed to her, and the other hasn't) nor a case involving scholars or academics (e.g. a debate between a theist and an atheist where both take themselves to have sound non-testimonial arguments for their respective positions).

Now consider some particular proposition such that belief in that proposition is part of Julia's worldview, and disbelief in that proposition is part of Maria's worldview. At La Villa de Guadalupe north of Mexico City there is a piece of cloth called the tilma of San Juan Diego, which some people believe to have a miraculous past. It is believed, among other things, that in 1521 an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared on Juan Diego's tilma (a kind of cloak) and that the tilma was miraculously impervious to an anarchist bombing in 1921 (which destroyed the shrine in which the tilma was kept). Let's consider the proposition that God protected the tilma in 1921, and suppose that this proposition is widely believed in Julia's community (and that Julia believes it as well), and that it is widely disbelieved in Maria's community (and that Maria disbelieves it as well).

Imagine, finally, that Julia and Maria meet, and come to discuss the question of whether God protected the tilma in 1921. They offer arguments for and against that claim. They discuss – in some detail – their respective communities and their respective personal

histories. They discuss the fact that the proposition that God protected the tilma in 1921 coheres with Julia's worldview, but not with Maria's worldview. They discuss the fact that their respective worldviews are inherited, in the sense described above. They share everything they know that is relevant to the issue of whether the tilma was miraculously protected, and they share everything they know about why they came to believe what they respectively believe about that proposition.⁹ However, since neither Julia nor Maria scores a decisive argumentative victory, neither suspends judgment about the proposition that God protected the tilma in 1921. Julia continues to believe that proposition, and Maria continues to disbelieve that proposition.

The application of our relativistic entitlement theory (§2.1) to this case is relatively straightforward. Julia is entitled to trust the testimony of her community, because not trusting that testimony would result in her losing access to a significant body of (from her perspective) true beliefs, namely, many of her beliefs about metaphysics and ethics. If she were to give up trusting the testimony of her community, it would result in a significant change in her cognitive practices, and the loss (so it seems to her) of her religious knowledge. And Julia satisfies the open question and no vice conditions on entitlement to trust. Julia might, of course, have inquired further into the reliability of her community's testimony – she might have engaged in some philosophical theology, attempting to verify the metaphysical and ethical claims of her community – but her failure to do so does not seem epistemically vicious. Therefore, she is entitled to trust the testimony of her community, which says that God protected the tilma in 1921. Her belief is reasonable, given her background; note that (so we can easily imagine) she does not violate the open question and no vice conditions on reasonable belief. The same, *mutatis mutandis*, for Maria. I conclude that both Julia and Maria's beliefs about the tilma are reasonable.

We have made things simpler by treating trust as an all-or-nothing affair (§2.1), and by imagining that Julia trusts the testimony of her community, and not that of Maria's community, and that Maria trusts the testimony of her community, and not that of Maria's community. More realistically, we should have said that Julia trusts her own community's testimony to a greater degree than that of Maria's community, and the same for Maria, *mutatis mutandis*. Given a suitable formulation of relativistic entitlement theory, in terms of degrees of trust, we would still get the desired result: a difference in reasonable belief (or in reasonable degree of belief) as a result of a difference in entitlement to trust.

Finally, we can see how Julia and Maria are poised to recognize the reasonableness of their respective beliefs, and thus how this ordinary religious disagreement could become a mutually recognized reasonable disagreement. Imagine that Julia recognizes that Maria is entitled to trust the testimony of her (Maria's) community, given Maria's perspective (i.e. her secular worldview), and that Maria recognizes that Julia is entitled to trust the testimony of her (Julia's) community, given Julia's perspective (i.e. her Catholic worldview). Both take the other's belief about the tilma to be false, both take the other's worldview to be largely wrong, and both take the other's favored source of information to be unreliable. But this is compatible with taking the other's belief about the tilma to be reasonable, since it is compatible with taking the other to be entitled to trust her favored source of information, and with taking her belief to be reasonable, in virtue of her being so entitled.

⁹ They seem now to be at what Feldman (2006) calls "full disclosure" (p. 220).

3.2 Conditions for mutually recognized reasonable disagreement

This suggests that, in general, mutually recognized reasonable disagreement will be possible when disagreement results from a difference in inherited worldview.¹⁰ In such cases, difference in inherited worldview, i.e. difference that results from historical and ongoing membership in different communities, leads to difference in entitlement to trust sources of information.^{11,12}

Disagreement resulting from difference in worldview is **deep disagreement**. Julia and Maria disagree not only about the tilma, but about theism, about the possibility of miracles, about the reliability of local clerical testimony. Other disagreements appear **shallow** by comparison. Recall Paddy and Roddy (§1), who agree about everything, apart from the outcome of the match. Their worldviews are the same; they just disagree on this one point. In such cases of shallow disagreement, suspension of judgment seems warranted, and thus, in such cases of shallow disagreement, mutually recognized reasonable disagreement will not be possible.¹³

[It is also possible for two people to reasonably suspend judgment on the reasonableness of their positions (unlike our case of Julia and Maria, who take each other's positions to be reasonable), but to reasonably *not* suspend judgment on the controversial proposition (unlike Paddy and Roddy, who do). I defend this possibility in "Higher-Order Epistemic Attitudes and Intellectual Humility," forthcoming in *Episteme*. Such a situation, in many cases, might well precede the mutual recognition of reasonableness described here.]

3.3 Incommensurability

¹⁰ Alvin Goldman (2010) offers a non-relativistic account of reasonable disagreement resulting from inherited worldview, on which people are taught by their communities to trust certain sources of information (p. 197-8). Given the assumption that "generic testimonial norms" are among the objectively correct epistemic norms, Goldman argues that reasonable disagreement can arise when two people have been taught by their communities to trust different sources of information (p. 198-203). Given the objective correctness of the generic testimonial norms, both people are objectively justified in accepting as correct the epistemic norms of their community, e.g. trusting a particular scripture, or trusting the testimony of a particular group of experts (p. 198). But this doesn't give us a way of understanding mutually recognized reasonable disagreement, for once the disagreeing parties disclose the source of their disagreement, the objectively correct generic testimonial norms will now prescribe suspension of judgment about which community's testimony is to be trusted. In this connection, Feldman (2006) argues that "[t]he fact that one's own starting point [e.g. set of inherited epistemic norms] has, let us grant, some justification in isolation hardly suffices to defend the view that it retains that justification once one realizes that other people ... have a different starting point with as much 'objective' initial credibility as one's own." (pp. 225-6)

¹¹ This picture of disagreement can be formulated in Bayesian terms (cf. White 2005, p. 446, and Kelly 2010, pp. 120-1): different people inherit different prior probabilities from their respective communities, which results (after some updating) in reasonable disagreement. S's trusting some source F to degree n could be understood as consisting of the fact that S's prior probability distribution includes $P(p|F \text{ says } p) = n$.

¹² This isn't to say that there aren't other conditions that may allow for the possibility of mutually recognized reasonable disagreement. For example, two people might have different "apparent insights" into the truth of different "outlooks," which include the truth of some proposition p along with an error theory about the apparent insights of those who embrace alternative outlooks (Bergmann, 2009 p. 238-40). But some ordinary disagreements, which I have argued can aspire to be mutually recognized reasonable disagreements, such as the case of Julia and Maria (§3.1), do not fit Bergmann's model, as the parties to the disagreement do not claim to have apparent insights (which are not, or cannot be, shared in discussion).

¹³ Compare Reid's discussion of the case of the "mathematical friend" (op. cit., pp. 262-3).

Wittgenstein (1969) compares Moore's certainty that he has hands – a paradigm “hinge proposition” – to certain religious beliefs, for example that Jesus did not have two human parents, and that in the Eucharist wine transforms into blood (§239). For Wittgenstein, hinge propositions are certainties immune from doubt; and thus the possibility arises of a clash between people with conflicting hinge propositions. Thus:

239. [...] And so if Moore said “I know that this is wine and not blood”, Catholics would contradict him.

609. Supposing now we meet people [who] instead of the physicist, they consult an oracle. (And for that we consider them primitive.) Is it wrong for them to consult an oracle and be guided by it? — If we call this “wrong” aren't we using our language-game as a base from which to *combat* theirs?

611. Where two principles really do meet which cannot be reconciled with one another, then each man declares the other a fool and a heretic.

612. I said I would ‘combat’ the other man, — but wouldn't I give him *reasons*? Certainly; but how far for they go? At the end of reasons comes *persuasion*. (Think what happens when missionaries convert natives.)

The picture of deep disagreement suggested by these passages is unappealing. It implies the **radical incommensurability** of worldviews, on which rational dialogue and mutual criticism, between people with different worldviews, is impossible. This is the view that Feldman has in mind when he criticizes the idea that “starting points are beyond rational scrutiny.” (2006, p. 225)¹⁴ But our relativistic entitlement theory (§2.1) doesn't imply radical incommensurability. Two reasons for this. First, as we just saw (§3.1), mutually recognized reasonable disagreements are possible. Second, recall the open question conditions on entitlement to trust and on reasonable belief (§1). It is a necessary condition on entitlement to trust a source of information that one not have sufficient reason to believe that said source is unreliable, and a necessary condition on reasonable belief that p that one not have sufficient reason to believe $\sim p$. Our trust in a particular source of information, and our beliefs derived from that source, are open to rational scrutiny. Two people who trust different sources of information might have a rational discussion about the reliability of a particular source of information, a source that one, but not the other, trusts. Far from having to see disagreeing others as “fools” and “heretics,” we can see them, at least sometimes, as reasonable in their beliefs. And far from the inevitability of non-rational “combat,” we can hope for rational dialogue.

A kind of **partial incommensurability** is implied by our relativistic entitlement theory: people with different entitlements to trust may be unable to agree on how to respond to a particular piece of evidence, e.g. the fact that local priests believe that God protected the tilma in 1921. So there is no guarantee of fruitful dialogue between people with different entitlements to trust. Likewise, there may be no way to resolve many disputes about the reliability of sources – at the end of their discussion (§3.1), Julia and Maria have come to no such agreement, and no such agreement may be possible for them.

¹⁴ Feldman conflates the view that “the rationality of these starting points ... comes for free” (which is maintained by entitlement theories) and that “these starting points are not amenable to rational evaluation and that rationality consists only in properly drawing out the consequences of one's starting points in the light of the information one has acquired” (which isn't entailed by entitlement theories per se).

Rational dialogue will be possible only when there is some overlap of entitlements to trust. (Mutual recognition of reasonableness, on the other hand, is possible even without overlap of entitlements.) Consider a simple case: Simon believes in astrology, Amanda doesn't, and she aims to convince him of this by testing the predictions of Simon's favorite spiritualist, Lupe. A careful record of Lupe's predictions is kept, and they are compared with what actually happens (which is noted using means independent of Lupe's predictions). Once Simon sees that Lupe is almost invariably wrong in her predictions, he eventually (if reluctantly) comes to doubt the reliability of astrology, and his entitlement to trust it evaporates. My relativistic diagnosis of what goes on in this case is that Simon and Amanda share a commitment to trusting the scientific method (as well as to whatever independent means are used to test Lupe's predictions, e.g. perception). And this is the basis for Amanda's critique: Simon's commitment to induction and perception rationally requires him to believe, after enough failed predictions, that astrology is unreliable.

But, again, this kind of resolution is not guaranteed. If Simon has rejected induction and perception, and adopted astrology as his only guide, he may reasonably remain unconvinced. If this is the case, he comes to resemble a certain kind of philosophical skeptic, who maintains that "all our reasoning and judging powers are fallacious in their nature"; as Reid points out, "it would be impossible by argument to beat him out of this stronghold; and he must even be left to enjoy his scepticism." (op. cit., p. 276) The extreme astrologer, who rejects induction and perception, must likewise be left to enjoy her position.

Partial incommensurability also arises from the no vice conditions on entitlement to trust and on reasonable belief. Whether someone has been epistemically vicious may itself be a matter of disagreement: when secularists talk about superstition, credulity, and enthusiasm, and religious people talk about faith and spirituality, they are talking about the same thing. If two people cannot agree about the relevant questions of epistemic vice, then they will be unable to come to mutually recognized reasonable disagreement.

4 Objections and replies

4.1 The objection from subjectivity

You might object that our relativistic entitlement theory (§2.1) makes the notion of reasonable belief "subjective." One worry might be that the notion is "subjective," while Feldman's notion is "objective." This may be, but it would not threaten our defense of naïve liberalism – for we have sought to make sense of naïve liberalism, by articulating a charitable defense of this common sense epistemological view. If naïve liberalism is false when interpreted using an "objective" notion of reasonable belief, so much the worse for that interpretation.

A related worry concerns is that our relativistic entitlement theory equates reasonable belief with blameless belief (§1). However, reasonable belief in virtue of entitlement to trust isn't merely blameless. Julia is not only blameless in trusting the testimony of her community; her trust is positively warranted in virtue of its cognitive importance for her. Our theory leaves open the possibility of blameless yet unreasonable belief, given the open question and no vice conditions on reasonable belief (§2.1). Someone might have sufficient reason to believe that her favored source is unreliable, and yet blamelessly fail to respond to her reasons, and continue to trust that source. Alternatively, someone might blamelessly fail to satisfy the no vice condition on reasonable belief: while we may

be culpable for some egregious instances of wishful thinking, other instances are more subtle, and in such instances our reasoning is biased (and therefore epistemically vicious) through no fault of our own.

Another worry is that it is implausible to place no a priori constraints on the content of worldviews that might generate entitlement to trust, e.g. to not rule our entitlement to trust astrological prediction on the basis of the “absurdity” or “craziness” of astrology. However, I see no plausible way to place such constraints on the content of worldviews. For example, if astrology, on which the positions of the planets and stars makes a difference when it comes to the course of human affairs, is ruled out, then I see no way to avoid ruling out a worldview on which wine can transform into blood and on which someone was once resurrected from the dead. And I do not think that a *political* liberal could be satisfied with ruling that worldview out, in the relevant sense.

A final worry is that it is a consequence of my account that someone could be reasonable in believing *p* in the face of disagreement with someone who knows *p* is false and who can support her view with very good arguments. But we should accept this consequence: as James Pryor (2004) argues, a person’s background beliefs and other commitments can make it the case that sound arguments, that would otherwise be very good arguments, are “dialectically ineffective,” i.e. unsuccessful, where “[a]n argument succeeds for a given audience to the extent that it presents the audience with a piece of reasoning they can rationally accept.” (p. 369) Julia may know that God protected the tilma in 1921, and her arguments may be sound, but they are dialectically ineffective in the context of her disagreement with Maria, who cannot rationally accept their premises.

4.2 The objection from non-epistemic reasonableness

The prudential value of a belief can make it seem ‘reasonable’ for a person to hold the belief even though the belief is not reasonable for another person having the same evidence. For example, a hostage and a neutral reporter on the scene may have the same evidence about the prospects for the hostage’s release. The hostage, unlike the reporter, may have a motive for believing that he will be released. We might say that the hostage, but not the reporter, is reasonable in so believing, given this motive. But this is not an epistemic evaluation, and not my concern here. (Feldman 2006, p. 221)

Critics of entitlement theory sometimes argue that the entitlement in question is “prudential,” “pragmatic,” or “practical,” and not “epistemic” (Jenkins 2007, Brueckner 2007). But the entitlement enjoyed by Julia doesn’t resemble that enjoyed by the hostage in Feldman’s example. The hostage, by having a higher-than-objectively-warranted credence that she will be released, aims to secure for herself various goods: psychological comfort while she remains a hostage, which cool attitude may contribute to her eventually being released. These are uncontroversially “non-epistemic” goods. Entitlement to trust doesn’t concern “non-epistemic” goods, but an uncontroversially epistemic good: true belief. For example, in trusting perception in the absence of evidence that perception is reliable, I aim not to secure psychological comfort or physical security, but true belief. It is in this sense that the reasonableness in question is

epistemic.¹⁵ (There may be other senses of “epistemic,” but we have no reason to think that those other senses are intended by naïve liberals.)

Compare one’s permission to lie to a malefactor (§2.3). Although one’s lie violates a moral rule, one’s permission for that violation is a *moral* permission. Our reason for breaking the rule consists in the (perceived) *morally* relevant bad consequences of not breaking it. Compare various non-moral reasons to lie: to avoid a trifling inconvenience, to inflict harm for no reason, and so on. By the same token, because entitlement to trust depends on the (perceived) *epistemically* relevant bad consequences of failure to trust (*viz.* preservation of a significant body of true beliefs), the present notion of reasonable belief is epistemic.¹⁶

4.3 The objection from long-term epistemic reasonableness

Somewhat similarly, having an unreasonable faith in your favorite theory now may enable you to believe many important truths later on[.] This shows there can be a kind of long-run *epistemic* benefit to an unjustified belief. This, too, is not my concern here. (Feldman 2006, p. 221)

But if we seek to make sense of naïve liberalism, we cannot dismiss the idea that the long-run epistemic benefits of trust make a difference when it comes to the reasonableness of beliefs based on said trust. There may be an epistemologically important sense of “reasonable belief” on which reasonableness doesn’t depend on any long-run epistemic benefits, and “reasonable” (in that sense) disagreement may be impossible, but this is orthogonal to naïve liberalism, if we can find a more charitable understanding of the naïve liberal’s notion of reasonable belief. The impossibility of “reasonable” disagreement will have no revisionist consequence if a parochial sense of “reasonable belief” is employed.

4.4 The objection from uniqueness

Some epistemologists have argued against the possibility of mutually recognized reasonable disagreement by appeal to the following principle:

Epistemic uniqueness: For any proposition *p*, given a body of evidence (relevant to the question of whether *p*), there is only one reasonable doxastic attitude to take towards *p*. (White 2005, p. 445, Feldman 2006, p. 231, 2007, p. 207, Christensen 2007, p. 192; cf. Elga 2007)

If entitlements to trust are a species of evidence, then the approach to disagreement defended here is compatible with epistemic uniqueness. We might say that Julia and Maria don’t have the same evidence, because of their different entitlements to trust. On the other hand, if entitlements to trust aren’t a species of evidence, then the approach to disagreement defended here must reject epistemic uniqueness. If this is right, then Julia

¹⁵ The notion of reasonableness remains an internalist notion, in the sense that someone’s beliefs can be reasonable, in this sense, even if unreliable. But does not give us reason to think that this notion of reasonableness is non-epistemic. Compare the internalist intuition that the beliefs of the victim of an evil demon are unreliable, but epistemically justified.

¹⁶ Compare clearly non-epistemic entitlements to trust one’s friends (Morton 1988, Baker 1989, Stroud 2006).

and Maria have the same evidence, even after they have discussed the source of their disagreement, and their case is a counterexample to epistemic uniqueness.^{17,18}

The resolution of this question awaits a theory of evidence. There are theories of evidence that entail that actual people rarely or never have the same evidence (and so uniqueness rarely or never actually applies). Feldman (2004) suggests (though see below) that a person's evidence consists of her token beliefs, perhaps along with some of her "experiences or perceptual states" (pp. 225-6), and defends the view that a piece of evidence is "available" to someone iff she is thinking about it (Ibid. p. 232). Strictly speaking, then, no two people could ever have the same evidence, on the assumption that no two people could ever have the same token beliefs, experiences, or perceptual states. Alternatively, consider Timothy Williamson's (2000, pp. 184-208) equation of a person's evidence with the propositions that she knows. On this view, two people could have the same evidence, so long as they know the same propositions. The same is true if we equate a person's evidence with the propositions that she believes. Something similar is defended by Feldman when he writes that the "*total possible evidence* a person has at a time includes all and only the information the person has 'stored in his mind' at the time." (Ibid. p. 226) Two people could have the same evidence, on this view, since their two minds could store the same information. On any of these views, Julia and Maria would not have the same evidence, and epistemic uniqueness would never apply in cases of deep disagreement.

This is related to the question of whether Julia and Maria are "epistemic peers" – and thus to the question of whether I have defended, in this paper, the possibility of mutually recognized "peer" disagreement. The resolution of this question awaits a definition of "epistemic peers." We could say that two people are epistemic peers iff they are equals when it comes to epistemic virtue, or when it comes to the epistemic virtues relevant to some question (Gutting 1982, p. 83, cf. Bergmann 2009, p. 336). We could give either an "internalist" or an "externalist" account of epistemic virtue. On the former, we might appeal to "general epistemic virtues such as intelligence, thoughtfulness, and freedom from bias" (Kelly 2005, p. 175), sincerity in seeking the truth (Bergmann 2009, p. 336), along with openmindedness, intellectual integrity, intellectual honesty, and so on (cf. Gutting, op. cit.). Julia and Maria are (for all we have said) epistemic peers, in this sense, and might recognize each other as such, and so mutually recognized reasonable peer disagreement, in this sense of "peer," is possible. On an "externalist" account, we might understand mutual recognition of peerhood to require that "neither of us has any particular reason to think that he or she enjoys some advantage over the other ... or that he or she is more or less reliable about the relevant domain." (Kelly 2010, p. 112) Along the same lines, we could say that "you count your friend as an epistemic peer with respect to [some claim] if and only if you think that, conditional [on] the two of your disagreeing about the claim, the two of you are equally likely to be mistaken." (Elga 2007, p. 499) Julia and Maria cannot recognize each other as epistemic peers, in this sense. Alternatively, we could say that two people are epistemic peers iff they are equals when it comes to epistemic virtue, etc., *and* equals when it comes to evidence, i.e. when they have

¹⁷ In this case, the present approach falls in with other approaches that reject epistemic uniqueness (Riggs 2008, Goldman 2010, p. 195; cf. White 2005, p. 446)

¹⁸ However, even if this is right, the following is unthreatened by our argument:

Epistemic uniqueness, revised: For any proposition *p*, given a body of evidence (relevant to the question whether *p*) and a set of entitlements to trust sources of information (relevant to the question whether *p*), there is only one reasonable doxastic attitude to take towards *p*.

the same evidence, or equally good evidence, relevant to some question (Kelly 2005, pp. 174-5). Whether Julia and Maria are epistemic peers, in this sense, will (as above) depend on our theory of evidence.

On some definitions of “epistemic peer,” therefore, I have not defended the possibility of mutually recognized “peer” disagreement. Does this threaten my defense of naïve liberalism? It does only if naïve liberalism – or whatever view of disagreement contemporary common sense holds – implies the possibility of mutually recognized peer disagreement. But there is no reason to think that it does, given that “epistemic peer” is a term of art invented by philosophers.¹⁹

5 Conclusion

We have made sense of naïve liberalism, by defending an internalist and relativistic theory of epistemic entitlement to trust sources of information. People who inherit different worldviews will be entitled to trust different sources of information, which will lead to reasonable disagreement, and when the source of such disagreement is recognized, mutually recognized reasonable disagreement will be possible.²⁰

¹⁹ Compare Feldman’s (2009, p. 300) discussion of the notion, in connection with the formulation of a “conciliatory” view of disagreement, which is meant to threaten naïve liberalism.

²⁰[This paper was written in response to a workshop with Richard Feldman at Brown University in 2004, where he presented his paper “Reasonable Religious Disagreements.” Over the years I’ve received valuable feedback from students in seminars at Texas Tech University (2006) and Fordham University (2008), from audiences at the Catholic Institute of Sydney (2006), Southern Methodist University (2007), the University of Edinburgh (2011), the Arché Philosophical Research Center (2011), the University of Copenhagen (2011), and Dartmouth College (2011). Thanks also and in particular to Jessica Brown, Evan Butts, Yuri Cath, Jonathan Ichikawa, Bryan Frances, Uriah Kriegel, Duncan Pritchard, and Mike Ridge.]

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