

Deliberating through Group Differences in Education for Trust and Respect

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Introduction

In an educational setting with students from a variety of cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds, there is the abiding challenge of fostering mutual respect in spite of conflicting beliefs. The extent of the disagreement falls along a continuum. A limited kind can be sub-cultural differences among members of the same culture. For example, some Caucasian students from one geographical region or socioeconomic status hold one view, relative to their culture, about appropriate forms of cultural expression that differs from Caucasians in the other regions. Another form of cultural difference would be the broader definition of family held by cultures from South and Latin American countries compared with a definition of family, as primarily nuclear, that characterizes the American middle-class ideal. In the American context, the competition among cultural groups (e.g., Caucasians, African Americans, Native Americans, those of so-called "Hispanic" descent from the Caribbean, South and Latin America) over whose narrative will be socially and politically determinant constitutes a form of cultural conflict. The Jewish and Palestinian cultures, which have differing religious beliefs and political views regarding Jerusalem, are exemplars of extreme cultural differences.

In Nicholas Appleton's (1983) view, "cultural conflict" occurs when there is disagreement "between different cultural groups; when culturally, ethnically, or racially identifiable groups clash over material rewards, status, power or values" (p. 157). The most significant aspect of Appleton's

definition of cultural conflict for the purpose of this article is that the conflict is based on the cultural, ethnic, or racial distinctiveness of the contending parties. The question I am addressing is: In the context of differing conceptions of the good life in a democracy, on what basis can education encourage mutual respect for the beliefs of others without illiberally imposing a particular moral or political view? Or, relatedly, how should respect be fostered in a democracy given the differences among ways of life?

As a proponent of democratic deliberation, Amy Gutmann maintains that schools can promote respect through implementing the principles and procedures of deliberative democracy in a “politics of recognition” or public acknowledgement of minority cultural beliefs and their significance for political, social, and educational policy. For Gutmann (2004), this approach recognizes “the role that cultural differences have played in shaping society and the world in which children live” (p. 71). I argue that despite Gutmann’s cogent efforts to accommodate a plurality of cultural views in the politics of recognition within a deliberative democratic framework, for a multicultural democratic society, Gutmann’s form of deliberation falls short of the moral ideal of civic equality that fosters mutual respect. I develop and elaborate upon this critique of Gutmann below.

Democratic Deliberation, Gutmann, and Respect

The body of Gutman’s work on democratic deliberation fits within a fairly recent discourse on morally legitimate forms of government in society. Over the last 30 years, democratic deliberation theory emerged in the political philosophy literature as participatory politics has gained prominence on the political front. It has done so as a counter reaction to liberalism and its institutions, in the 1950s and 1960s, that were intended to promote and preserve human flourishing but instead were exposed as failed bureaucracies (e.g., military, education, Congress). As Bohman and Rehg (1996) explain in their seminal text on deliberative democracy, two central tenets characterize deliberative democracy. The first is “that deliberation constrains citizens to cast their proposals in relation to the common good” and the second is that “deliberation should improve decision-making” (p. xiv).¹ Gutman’s work is particularly concerned with the second claim, particularly given the fact of pluralism in society.

On the face of it, Gutmann (1987/1999) appears to be offering a plausible basis for respect of cultures in democratic deliberation. Culture “roughly speaking, consists of patterns of thinking, speaking and acting that are associated with a human community larger than a few families” (p. 304).² Gutmann (1999) believes that respect is “the most

basic premise of democratic education and further that an ideal democracy is a “deliberative democracy, offering opportunities for its citizens to deliberate about the content of democratic justice and to defend their best understanding of justice at any given time” (p. 306). To promote respect, one way to approach cultural difference is through a “politics of recognition.” Gutmann (1999) believes that Democratic education supports a politics of recognition based on respect for individuals and their equal rights as citizens” (p. 306). In education, this approach involves for example, acknowledging a diversity of beliefs in schooling curriculum, and the inclusion of women’s lives and contributions.

The politics of recognition is only one component of Gutmann’s ideal of fostering respect. One other aspect is the demand that cultural beliefs should be challengeable in a nod to the political preeminence of deliberative democracy. Gutmann believes that parties exhibit respect when they approach deliberative discourse with willingness to alter their beliefs in face of contravening evidence. In education, according to Gutmann (1999), “Open-minded learning in a multicultural setting—to which students bring competing presuppositions and convictions—is a prelude to democratic deliberation” (p. 307). Students are to be deliberatively engaged in the critical scrutiny of their beliefs as well as those of others. The upshot of Gutmann’s form of deliberation is that equitable treatment of cultural beliefs is *procedurally engendered* in that all cultural claims are given *prima facie* equal consideration in coming to the deliberation table, but beliefs are weighed on their merits in a manner consistent with the shared interests of the entire community and implicitly on the basis of norms of values and reasoning. Gutmann (2003) calls this framework of evaluating beliefs a matter of granting civic equality (p. 57).

Civic equality, Gutmann (2003) holds, is a demand for fairness, which supports claims that are “shared with and pertain to us as members of the community” (p. 57). Civic equality can “only be jointly held by individuals; it cannot be held in isolation” (p. 58). In Gutmann’s view, it is the appropriate work of schools to develop deliberative skills in children so that they can be better future citizens. The section below discusses the moral and epistemological challenges to promoting respect for cultural identity in Gutmann’s account. I show how trading recognition for a disposition to revise cultural beliefs in deliberation can raise issue of hegemony and oppression in a school setting.

Culture, Identity, and Group Beliefs

The shortcomings in Gutmann’s basis for mutual respect, as I view them, stem from the ways that Gutmann’s politics of recognition

navigates the political value it places on cultures. One component, the normative and liberal basis of the social contract, obliges the state to treat everyone equally. Contemporary liberalism fundamentally asserts that the liberal state is committed to a narrow set of universal rights for all of its citizens. As citizens, this freedom and equality,

Refer only to our common characteristics—our universal needs, regardless of our particular cultural identities, for “primary goods” such as income, health care, education, religious freedom, freedom of conscience, speech, press, and association, due process, the right to vote, and the right to hold public office. These are the interests shared by almost all people regardless of our particular race, religion, ethnicity, or gender. (Gutmann, 1994, p.4)

In a second aspect, Gutmann goes beyond contemporary liberalism to argue that citizenship entitles individuals to the additional primary good of a “secure cultural context” within which to realize their aspirations. However this right obtains only when the “content” of the culture does not violate the rights of others (1994, p. 5).

Navigating liberal democratic constraints upon the acknowledgment of cultural difference runs into difficulty at this point. On one hand the politics of recognition meets the ideological constraints of liberalism by granting members of cultural groups the allowances that their identities demand. On the other hand, Gutmann argues for limits on protecting cultural expression. For example in the area of free speech rights, permissible cultural practices or beliefs are to be respected while impermissible ones are to be merely tolerated.

Toleration extends to the widest range of views, as long as they stop short of threats and other direct and discernible harms to individuals. Respect is far more discriminating. Although we need not agree with a position to respect it, we must understand it as reflecting a moral point of view . . . A multicultural society is bound to include a wide range of such respectable moral disagreements, which offers us the opportunity to defend our views before morally serious people with whom we disagree and thereby learn from our differences. In this way we make a virtue out of the necessity of our moral disagreements. (Gutmann, 1994, p. 22)

Having to distinguish between those beliefs worthy of toleration and those of respect burdens the politics of recognition with the task of morally evaluating the cultural beliefs of minorities. Problematic here is who makes the determination that a particular belief is a “moral point of view” and how is the determination to be made.

Where there is cultural conflict the factors of who determines the moral legitimacy of a claim and the basis for doing so profoundly influ-

ence whether a given cultural view is taken seriously. Racial profiling is an example of the significance of who determines that a cultural view qualifies as a moral point of view and how. While few would disagree with taking steps to prevent racial profiling when it occurs, whether an event is experienced as racial profiling makes addressing the problem murky. At stake is the privilege of having one's perspectives taken seriously in deliberation where one presents reasons for beliefs that are collectively weighed and mediated to mitigate its harmful effects in society,

The recent incident in Cambridge, Massachusetts, of Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Harvard professor, and Sergeant James Crowley, Cambridge police officer, exemplifies the subjectivity of racial profiling (Natta & Goodnough, 2009). Gates was placed under arrest after the police came to his house upon reports of a possible burglary at his residence. After furnishing his identification to the officer inside his home, Gates was arrested outside on charges, later dropped, of disorderly conduct. Gates experienced the incident as a case of racism, while the police officer believed he was fulfilling his professional duty. The views of the larger American community were generally split along racial lines, with African Americans believing that Crowley acted upon racist assumptions and Whites saluting Crowley and in some cases believing that he was the victim of racial stereotypes against Whites. Contingent upon which point of view is decisive, either Crowley or Gates' claims would not be worthy of respect and their assertions would not warrant public discussion. The political fallout of the incident had a negative impact on President Obama's standing in the public's eyes. Obama weighed in by validating Gates' perspective as entitled to more of a benefit of the doubt from the officer. A CNN poll showed that by far Whites viewed Obama as being a less credible President (Steinhauser, 2009).

The politics of recognition implies a paradigm in which there are two parties (those doing the recognition and others being recognized). Clearly the recognizers are the majority, who would also be the ones to decide whether the minority beliefs meet Gutmann's conditions of respect by not being sexist, racist, homophobic, etc.³ Liberal democracy in principle presupposes that the majority judgments are made from neutral stance. In the list of cultural identities that Gutmann (1994) offers, White identity is not made explicit as an identity group that can have culture-specific interests in deliberation or should think critically about the racial implications of deliberated consensus. However without an awareness of the distinction between the majority culture and the liberal democratic one, the particular cultural lens of the majority prevails and shapes public policy in its own image. Scholars have recently explored extensively the resistance that many Whites have to

acknowledging the cohesiveness of their identity.⁴ When Whites fail to acknowledge their cultural identity there can be cultural bias in the evaluation of the minority cultural claims.

In the context of 21st century struggles for a more fair and just society, such debates about racial profiling demonstrate that incumbent in a discourse of the politics of recognition is a minority-majority dialectic informed by issues of power and interests that skew not only the outcome of deliberation but also whether some beliefs are even viewed worthy of careful public consideration.⁵

In education, this issue also arises in the competition among socio-economic groups (e.g., poor, working class, middle-class, and upper class) concerning whose ideology will be socially and politically dominant. Historically, the dominant mythology of education in America is a narrative of forward social progress that at the very least overlooks or fails to attend to the schooling trajectory of many poor and working class children and their families. Even the middle class way of life is perpetuated on a sub-text of consumption and consumer credit that supports the basis of our economy but can substantively limit the meaning of being middle class to one of perpetual financial indebtedness.⁶

Democratic Deliberation, Comprehensiveness, and Identity

The second argument of this article is that deliberation raises epistemological issues that are the source of political, and therefore moral, flaws in the politics of recognition. The argument above concerns the efficacy of the politics of recognition in deliberation for fostering respect for the minority view. Addressing the expectation in liberal democracy that minority group beliefs can always be responsive to deliberation, this part of the article asserts that deliberation so conceived is problematic. The epistemology of deliberation privileges individual claims acquired through evidence gathering. One consequence of this advantage is that a culture most acquainted with providing reasons-based evidence is most likely to fare best in deliberation. As a process that is incumbent upon objective criteria for reasons for beliefs or evidence, deliberation does not conventionally include cultural reasons for trust as causal source of beliefs. This epistemological constraint is where a political quandary has moral implications.

Cultural beliefs that underwrite group identity can be outside the purview of mutual deliberation because group members justifiably base those beliefs upon reasons for trusting members of their own cultures rather than for the belief.⁷ Deliberation under the terms of liberal democracy does not treat such group members fairly when it

presupposes that cultural beliefs are revisable solely on the basis of good reasons for the beliefs as compared with evidence that those they trust are reliable sources. As a consequence, deliberation can constrain the group member's defense of his or her context of choice. Additionally, group members can be forced to accept majority cultural beliefs being couched in liberal norms rather than instantiating some objective or universal political good.⁸ So construed, deliberation between majority and minority cultures can reflect asymmetrical reasoning, where the minority trust-caused beliefs do not have currency, while those of the majority do.

Gutmann's conception of cultural beliefs as justifiably revisable is underwritten by the view that cultural identity is not comprehensive. If comprehensiveness of cultures were to obtain, then challenging definitive cultural beliefs would equate to proposing limits on the freedom of the cultural group member. Denying the comprehensiveness of cultural identity removes coercion as a possible criticism of deliberative democracy as enforcing a given form of life on minorities.

Gutmann's own account of comprehensiveness is not explicitly defined in any of her works. However she uses as a point of departure the view that it is equivalent to beliefs being "all-encompassing" in the sense that Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz (1994) offer (p. 133). Gutmann explains that, "They consider a cultural identity group to be a group that represents a way of life that is (close to) 'encompassing' or 'comprehensive' (terms that are used interchangeably)" (p. 38). Margalit and Raz claim that the kinds of groups that exhibit features such as cohesiveness, mutual recognition, membership that is not based on achievement, and a common character are "encompassing groups" (p.133). In such groups, "Individuals find in them a culture which shapes to a large degree their tastes and opportunities, and which provides an anchor for their self-identification and the safety of effortless, secure belonging" (p. 133). While, as Raz and Margalit, offer "It may be no more than a brute fact that people's sense of their identity is bound up with their sense of belonging to encompassing groups and that their self-respect is affected by the esteem in which these groups are held" (p.134), Gutmann maintains that group identity is not all-encompassing. Because culture is not all encompassing, it cannot be comprehensive. Freedom and cultural identity are not related in this way.⁹

Gutmann (2003) claims that, in deliberative democracy, the benefits of culture, such as providing a context of choice, social security, and a basis of self-respect are all appropriately acknowledged. Central to civic equality as a moral notion and a politics of recognition is the aim of respecting cultural identity. Thus a "singularity of cultural identity . . . largely does

not exist,” and “individuals do not need to depend on a single encompassing culture to enjoy their freedom” (p. 48).

By my lights, Gutmann far too quickly concedes the equation of encompassing and comprehensiveness to Margalit and Raz, so that for a cultural identity to be comprehensive is for it to be all-encompassing. I view cultural identity as comprehensive but not-all encompassing because *comprehensive* refers to the role cultural beliefs can play in reasoning. As I argue below, comprehensiveness is a function of the availability of and exposure to experiences and evidence for one’s beliefs and trust in one’s group members. An *all-encompassing* cultural identity entails a level of isolation of cultures that is highly unlikely in the 21st century. However comprehensiveness involves not physically isolation but an epistemological resistance, well founded in experience and in networks of trust-worthy relationships, to considering claims beyond one’s culturally based beliefs. It would follow then that Gutmann’s claims about the civic equality that deliberation provides to cultures are far too sweeping. In her form of deliberation, limits on the freedom of the cultural group member remain firmly in place when there is such culturally-based resistance to amending beliefs because the salient cultural identity is comprehensive.

A source of the comprehensiveness of *group beliefs*, I maintain, are the beliefs that members of cultural groups have in common with each other. Group beliefs are those beliefs that are held together with others. Cultural group beliefs are a particular form of group beliefs in that they are not only held jointly, but in addition, being a member of a cultural identity group also meets the conditions of “mutual identification” as Gutmann (2003) terms it—or the terms of shared identity. These include forms of politically significant identities such gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (p. 9). As argued by Margaret Gilbert (2002), groups broadly construed constitute plural subjects. Being a member of a plural subject is to be jointly committed to that group (e.g. gender, race, class, ethnicity). The terms of commitment to the group generate expectations, rules and obligations for the individual to act and believe jointly with the group. According to Gilbert (2000) in *Sociality and Responsibility*:

A joint commitment is, precisely, joint. It is the commitment of more than one person. This has consequences for the “individual” commitments that derive from a joint commitment: I cannot be subject to such an “individual” commitment independent of all other people, and I cannot unilaterally rescind such a commitment. It stands or falls only with the underlying joint commitment, which itself can only be rescinded by us (the parties) to do it. With respect to the content of a joint commitment, in general a joint commitment is a commitment of certain parties to

do something *as a body*. (It may sometimes be less awkward to speak of being jointly committed to doing something *jointly* or *together*). (p. 32, Emphasis mine)

Gilbert claims that the decision to be jointly committed “generates reasons” for the person, who is a member of the plural subject, acting or believing as he or she does. Plural subjectivity applies to all collections of individuals who implicitly or explicitly enjoy the joint commitment of its members.

Although for Gilbert there is no distinction made among kinds of social groups,¹⁰ in my view cultural groups are a special kind of social group for which fulfilling the criterion of the political identity is a necessary condition of group membership. The cultural plural subject holds beliefs that pertain to a comparatively wider range of belief states or actions than ordinary social groups that are randomly and temporarily formed.

In my view the comprehensiveness of the beliefs derives from the individual holding beliefs in common with others of shared identity. The joint nature of these beliefs translates to a relationship of trust that bears on the ways members of a group identity acquire beliefs. Trust is variously conceived as an epistemological notion in which one comes to hold beliefs because of others rather than on the basis of evidence (Origgi, 2004, p. 61) and as a form of social capital (Putnam, 2000). An extensive discussion of the social and epistemological implications of trust is beyond the scope of this article.¹¹ Positively, Origgi (2004) argues that there is a pragmatic account of trust nurtured within cognitive networks that underwrites its epistemic efficiency in the cognitive division of labor and that is suggestive of its epistemic value. Negatively, it can be noted that Putnam (2000) convincingly argued that there was a trust deficiency in American society born of the increasing balkanization of social relations.

In my view, group members simply have more evidence for the trustworthiness of the source of their cultural beliefs. Thus a robust intentionality to believe together with others of one’s group is present when cultural/ethnic group members, as soon as they are cognitively mature, become aware that they share a canon of beliefs with others in their group in a way that defines their membership within the group. For cultural/ethnic group members this intentionality is quite pervasive. While mutual identification is not sufficient for comprehensiveness combined with intentionality, identity group membership is a significant epistemological factor in shaping the way that cultural group members think about cultural beliefs and limiting the context within which they make meaningful choices.

Cultural beliefs are not therefore all encompassing, however, in the sense that cultural group members are not conclusively closed to alter-

native evidence that is presented to prevailing cultural beliefs. Such claims may indeed come from within the culture, but the presumption of democracy and the presentation of alternative views alone are not sufficient to inspire trust and ultimately at times have to be imposed upon a dissenting cultural group member.

This account of comprehensiveness as involving a reasoning process in which cultural practices and stories can be the epistemological basis for the individual's beliefs is consistent with a seminal account of comprehensiveness presented by Rawls in *Political Liberalism*. According to Rawls (1993), a doctrine is comprehensive,

When it includes conceptions of what is of value in human life, and ideals of personal character, as well as ideals of friendship and of familial and associational relationships, and much else that is to inform our conduct, and in the limit to our life as a whole. A conception is fully comprehensive if it covers all recognized values and virtues within one rather precisely articulated system; whereas a conception is only partially comprehensive when it comprises a number of, but by no means all, nonpolitical values and virtues and is rather loosely articulated. (p. 13)

Rawls maintains that political liberalism is not proposing a comprehensive doctrine of the good, in that it is freestanding and does not appeal to any broad concept of value for its justification. Ostensibly Rawls distinguishes his political liberalism from comprehensive doctrines so painstakingly because were political liberalism to favor any one view, it would cease to be a just political ideal.¹² If I am right in my argument above, then the implications of comprehensive doctrines are even more thoroughgoing for liberalism than Rawls offers in that accepting solely evidence-based reasons in deliberation may not be sufficiently inclusive procedure.

As I explained above, my second argument is that although cultural beliefs may not irrevocably dictate a way of life, the weight of reasons tends to favor trust in the culture as a source of group member beliefs. Under these conditions, cultural beliefs are *epistemologically* comprehensive so that cultural beliefs can be impervious to deliberative scrutiny, conventionally conceived. Forcing cultures to conform to the outcome of deliberation with this form of doxastic orthodoxy would then immorally constrain their freedom and fail to respect their belief system. I elaborate upon this inference below.

Epistemological Comprehensiveness and Respectful Deliberation

Comprehensiveness conceived epistemologically has implications for what kind of deliberation exemplifies civic equality. One implication of

a epistemological view of comprehensiveness is that deliberation based on a non-comprehensive conception of culture is not sufficient of itself to create the conditions for fair terms of cooperation. When there are conflicting group beliefs, given that the truth of the matter may not be conclusively obtained, the culturally polarized nature of the conflict could be demeaning for one or the other culture. In an educational environment where students are placed in a multicultural setting with others who can have conflicting group beliefs, the social relations are made more complex by some students being from groups that are, for example, mainstream and others from groups that are marginalized.

Hypothetically, in non-comprehensive deliberation, the non-mainstream student is challenged by a standard of the good from outside of her culture and within the mainstream culture. The non-mainstream student then faces a crisis. The student must transcend his or her cultural beliefs. This effort can be fraught with social exclusion, cognitive leaps, and a seeming surrender to hegemony because as, I have argued, the student's beliefs are not his beliefs alone. Because cultural beliefs are held together with others, the process of non-comprehensive deliberation becomes for her a conflict of cultures, giving up the cultural belief that is now considered *flawed* for one that is acceptable to the mainstream culture.

For the privileged or dominant culture in non-comprehensive scrutiny, the same cannot be generally said for members of the majority to the same extent. While by their very status non-mainstream students or minorities can subject their cultural canon to critical examination, mainstream culture members are not making such a cultural Faustian choice. Majority culture members generally affirm and not challenge their culture when they assess their beliefs. For the non-mainstream culture, engaging in this process is not merely becoming a critical thinker. It can mean substantively rejecting one's culture or, alternately, taking on a performative stance where the student surrenders his cultural independence in order to conform to the local standard.¹³

The result is that critical scrutiny using the relevant criteria can be limited in the extent to which it transcends the majority culture for the majority student, particularly where his racial and cultural beliefs are concerned. Critically evaluating the evidence for one's cultural beliefs seems to have resonance most for students who are non-Western and minority.

McLaren's (1995) critique of schooling proposes that the mainstream, majority or the most socially powerful cultures often win in the conflict of cultural beliefs. They can do so, not because their beliefs are more warranted, but because of their relatively higher social standing. McLaren

claims that, though the questions of education seem answered in terms of liberal/liberal democratic principles, on the ground of schooling, outcomes systemically reflect the interests of the powerful, mainstream and majority. The impact of this bifurcation of value between principles and practice in education is especially nefarious given that student identity is developmentally unformed.¹⁴ That schools will influence student identity is a developmental fact, but it is the duty of schools to shape that identity responsibly. Doing so with respect for minority and majority students alike should involve helping students negotiate aspects of their identity by incorporating trust-based reasons in deliberation.

A further problem is also raised by testimony playing a central role in education. If teachers are of a different cultural background than their students, then the teachers' cultural background can become a hurdle to be overcome, particularly in middle school grades and higher. In some cases, students have testimony-dependent reasons not to trust teachers and other adults who are not of their culture.

Conclusion

I began this article with the question: In the context of differing conceptions of the good life in a democracy, on what basis can education encourage mutual respect for the beliefs of others without illiberally imposing a particular moral or political view? Or, relatedly, how should respect be fostered given the differences among ways of life? I proposed that the politics of recognition is a flawed construct and inadequate for engendering civic equality. In deliberative democracy, a joint commitment to identity groups is one of the social/psychological factors, which acts as a constraint on the group member to fully believe his or her group's beliefs. One's identity is at least in part constituted by the ideas and beliefs of the groups of which one is a part. One's group identity may not encompass the totality of one's personal identity, but the group identity aspect of personal identity can result in group beliefs being comprehensive. The joint commitment obliges the group member to hold to group beliefs or to make decisions about his or her group membership in light of what is believed together with others. If Gilbert's plural subject theory is right—that being a member of a group generates an obligation to believe and act in ways that have been sanctioned by the group—then the fact that cultural group beliefs are not all-encompassing, in Gutmann's sense, fails to be germane to the role of group beliefs in our web of beliefs.

Cultural group beliefs are comprehensive in that group beliefs are central in human reasoning. They are more deeply embedded in our web of beliefs. The distinction between comprehensive-all encompassing and

merely comprehensive beliefs in shaping reasoning is that in the case of the latter the group member can *justify* revising the group beliefs. This switching allegiance typically involves finding new sources of trustworthy testimony. On the other hand the notion of all encompassing would mean that the beliefs of the group member would be inaccessible to change and unrevisable. Gutmann is correct that culture is not all encompassing, but culture does shape reasons in such a way that changing one's cultural view is difficult.

Gutmann is therefore wrong in claiming that deliberative democracy premised on a principle of recognition engenders the fair consideration of cultural beliefs. Deliberative democracy wrongly presupposes that cultural members take part in deliberation merely as political agents who hold their cultural beliefs solely on the basis of reasons that typically may be assessed in deliberation. Rather participants can be cultural agents in possession of group beliefs acquired through trust in one's group members.

Hypothetically, trust beliefs may not initially respond to the deliberative process in diverse settings because the cultural agent does not have the same trust for those outside of her culture. Where cultural group members are forced into the deliberative framework of reasons for belief alone, the majority or more dominant group may coerce members of the minority culture to adopt practices and beliefs they do not reasonably accept, or they may feel pressured to do so.

This difficulty has significance for teaching deliberation as a means of fostering respect in a multicultural society in several ways. First the presuppositions of democratic deliberation may be oppressive. Where the views of democracy are not universally shared, the majority culture's participation in deliberation may carry the implication of legitimacy by virtue of status rather than by cogency of reasons or trust. The defense of deliberation ultimately becomes the dictate of authority rather than of reason. Second, given the role of trust in the development of group beliefs, the parties to the deliberation can have reasons not to trust the teacher and each other.

In my view, the kind of deliberation that exemplifies respect is one that lets stand cultural differences in the first order. There is a distinction between employing transcendent standards and transcending one's culture. In this case democracy being the prevailing political principle is just one belief of a cultural group. Instead, the culturally situated positionality of given views, should at the very least be introduced, explored, and possibly conceded at the inception of the dialogue. The dialogue should also address the facts of cultural group membership and the ways in which a belief being a cultural view involves address-

ing not only the belief, but also the ways in which the belief is related to the essential beliefs of the group. An appropriate question here would be, “What is at stake for the group member in this belief?” Deliberation can then examine these secondary matters first before the primary one of deliberating to a consensus. In this process, I would argue that a new level of trust begins to be established, which can be the foundation for deliberating about the beliefs themselves.¹⁵

Notes

¹ In their introduction to this edited work, Bohman and Rehg (1996) trace the historical trajectory of deliberative democracy, with respect to classical theorists such as John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, and Jacques Rousseau, but also prominent postwar theorists, such as John Dewey and Hannah Arendt, who deviated from the prevailing trend of democracy in terms of “competition, interests and voting” (p. xii), but who were not dominant in the broader discourse. Deliberative democracy formally emerged in the 1970s, in a movement of leftist populism. Jurgen Habermas’ figures prominently in this volume both in his own piece and as the subject of other contributions. Habermas’ discussion of his communicative rationality exemplified in an idealized procedure considers the effect of public reasoning in countering the power games of government and its institutions. In contrast to Habermas’ idealization, Gutman undertakes a much more practical study of democratic deliberation. Bohman and Rehg reference Gutmann’s work as a systematic attempt to address the problems raised by the notion of reasoned-based, civic discourse as a conduit of fairness in society where there are competing conceptions of the good.

² Gutmann’s other works illuminate what she means by the general definition of “culture.” Gutmann (1994) offers this account of the sense in which she is using the term: “In the United States, the controversy [about recognizing particular cultural identities of citizens] most often focuses upon the needs of African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, and women” (p. 3). In a later work she defines cultural identity consistent with the previous more general accounts. Gutmann (2003) refers to “identity groups.” These groups are associations of people who can be identified by shared social markers such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, religion, etc. Such group members share experiences and ideologies that are as Gutmann says “mutually recognizable features around which groups are identified with one another in politically significant ways” (p. 9).

³ There are ways in which the majority versus minority distinction is an oversimplification that overlooks counterexamples to White liberal dominance of the equality discourse in such socio-political nuances as majority members who align themselves with the minority in a truly balanced sharing of power. More substantively, the civil rights movement stands as a successful exemplar of minority activism within a politically moral framework. However both these counterexamples and the de jure victories of the civil rights movement have proven generally ineffective in countering the de facto segregation and biases

that are structural to American society. Hopefully, the distinction is made in a sufficiently plausible way. See Brooks (2009) for the discussion about the limited victories of the civil rights movement.

⁴ See Howard, 1999; Yosso, 2005, Applebaum, 2000; Bernstein, 2005.

⁵ As Brooks (2009) explains, the present political environment draws upon a different moral framework for racial justice than that of the civil rights era. The majority enacted civil rights legislation in the 1960s and 1970s as a culmination of a progressive reversal of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, which was external to the moral parameters of the constitution. Twin yet opposing states of “racial-success” and “racial-despair” characterize the lives of blacks now, in particular during the Obama phase of the “post-civil rights” era (p. xiii). Brooks argues that the media manipulates the presentation of Black forms of life to minimize the continuing structural discrimination.

⁶ See Anyon (1980).

⁷ In “Social Nature of Epistemically Normative Deliberation,” Fraser-Burgess (2009) argues that group membership can give access to good reasons for trust in one’s group members. The gist of the article is that believing the claims of one’s culture because of the testimony of others is a rational source of expertise. The paradigm of liberal democratic deliberation does not include assessment of these kinds of reasons and beliefs. For example, consider a teenager who believes that homosexuality is immoral because his parents taught him this doctrine in a highly sheltered upbringing. All other things being equal, evidence of the trustworthiness of his parents is not challengeable in democratic deliberation and his anti-homosexual beliefs are not easily revisable by the presentation of counter arguments.

⁸ As Misak (2000) argues, presenting reasons that others must accept rests upon “prior acceptance” of equality or respect for persons as an ideal (p. 7).

⁹ In “Group Identity: Deliberative Democracy and Diversity” (2011), Fraser-Burgess fully elaborates upon this argument against the comprehensiveness of identity that parses the notion of “all-encompassing.”

¹⁰ Two people walking together, identity groups, and interests groups would all be generally categorized as plural subjects.

¹¹ See Hardin, 1995; Cook, 2001; Cook, Hardin, and Levi, 2005; Origgi, 2004. The Russell Sage Foundation also recently published a single-authored, multi-volume, interdisciplinary series on the empirical and conceptual issues around trust and social cooperation. Some of texts listed above are from this series. See Zagzebski, 2003.

¹² Rawls intends for liberalism to not interfere with the comprehensive doctrines of any one and it is arguable whether he succeeds. See Misak, 2000.

¹³ McLaren (2009) discusses this phenomenon extensively in the notion of subaltern students’ “oppositional” reactions that lead to making radically rebellious behavior choices, in the school setting.

¹⁴ Developmental factors provide a window where a child or teenager, through building alternate trust relationships with teachers and school personnel, could become more open to beliefs other than those of his/her culture. The relative openness of children and teenagers is also another point in favor of jettisoning all-encompassing from comprehensive. The social circle of children and teenag-

ers provide different contexts within which to view their lives, although their sense of what they are able to believe can be heavily constrained by cultural tradition.

¹⁵ In “Group Identity, Deliberative Democracy and Diversity in Education,” Fraser-Burgess (2011) appeals to philosophical distinctions in the meaning of freedom to establish the difference between comprehensiveness and comprehensiveness plus all-encompassing beliefs. Fraser-Burgess also discusses how identity theory supports the assertion that schools are places of identity conflict as further basis for arguing for the modification in the educational implementation of deliberative democracy.

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