

descriptive, and do not shy away from acknowledging the messy and complex reality of politics.

**Liberalism in Practice: The Psychology and Pedagogy of Public Reason.** By Olivia Newman. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015. 216p. \$37.00 cloth.  
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It seems ever more vital for political philosophers to understand the practical workings of liberal democracy. Liberal societies continually encounter fraught controversies on issues like same-sex marriage and the integration of different faiths. Polarized opinions on these matters call for deliberation based on public reasons, wherein simple appeals to fixed principles seem often to fall short. Different sides in the debates seem to offer views that appear reasonable from their own points of view. Against this background, Olivia Newman's timely and clearly written defense of a "practical" liberalism advances an innovative view based on an internally differentiated concept of human psychology.

The central concern of *Liberalism in Practice* is that familiar accounts of liberal public reason underestimate the fact that people typically hold different values, and exhibit different character traits, across the many "domains" of life (Chapter 4). For instance, a ruthless CEO may be tolerant and generous in his or her personal life. This point leads Newman to question the generally held liberal assumption that the stability of political values depends on finding their source in citizens' own "comprehensive," nonpublic worldviews. While the assumption seems attractive, she astutely observes that it risks being exclusionary. Because liberals are committed to the fact of human diversity, it is exactly the citizens whose private worldview does not seem to yield liberal political values whom liberals should attempt to persuade into accepting a public ethic of fairness, equality, and reciprocity.

Newman responds to this predicament by drawing skillfully on recent developments in empirical and cognitive psychology. The insights of this literature lead her to query not only the "moralized" Rawlsian conception of public reason but also pragmatic, "modus vivendi" approaches, which characterize political commitment as a Hobbesian project of shoring up self-interested power. Considering both positions improbable, the author locates a third-way liberal justification that she views as "dispositional." Because people can and do switch contextually between different values, it is possible to learn to practise political toleration. By drawing on Claude Lévi-Strauss's concept of *bricolage*, among others, her main claim is that the tendency for contextual thought may be exploited creatively through educational programs that support a reasoned search for public consensus between different worldviews. In contrast with feminist writers who are wary of strong distinctions between the public and private, Newman builds on the

human ability to "compartmentalize" to suggest a compelling new ground for liberal practice.

The book is notable for considering a wide-ranging, cross-cultural literature in empirical psychology, and for drawing from both Western and Eastern traditions. By demonstrating the frequency of "role-dependent" reasoning globally, Newman aims to accommodate integralist religious believers, and to offer them a psychologically sustainable liberalism. Integralist citizens present a challenge for liberalism by sometimes wishing to apply values that seem intolerant in the public domain. It may be unrealistic to suppose that very conservative believers would find resources within their personal worldview to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights, for instance. However, it would be equally implausible to regard any tolerance on their part as purely self-interested. The more likely situation would be that the religious integralist often respects others' civil rights due to having a settled disposition to do so. If liberal political practice may be understood, then, as a matter of being inured, or as a question of experience, it seems timely to focus on the possibility of teaching and learning liberal values through a certain pedagogy.

Newman's practical focus is refreshing, given the sometimes technical nature of the theoretical literature on liberal public reason. The book contributes to a growing research base, such as in the ongoing work of, amongst others, Gerald Gaus, Stephen Macedo and Meira Levinson, concerning religious accommodation and civic education. The themes of this book also dovetail usefully with scholarly debates around "deliberative" forms of democracy.

Most generally, this work is valuable for its implicit advocacy of the broader values of liberalism, such as inclusion, pluralism, tolerance, and humanism. But a number of questions appear to arise from this focus. One might be whether Newman's psychological realism explains the practical workings of liberal democracies, or whether it actually justifies them morally. Even if it achieves the former, it may be that this form of liberalism will continue to seem unpromising, or even misguided, to some who insist on alternative moral truths. For the author's underlying idea seems to be that liberalism is an act of persuasion first and, perhaps secondarily, a metaphysically grounded morality. But leaving aside the possibility that not all liberals would agree on this point, it invites us to ask whether we ourselves are persuaded by liberalism, and whether being "persuaded" means discounting other forms of human connection and organization. How much persuasion is apt when confronted with illiberalism? And where does the borderline fall between persuasion and coercion?

These are obviously difficult questions, and Newman seems right finally to conclude that "the promise of liberalism is not in theory but rather in the lived experience

of citizens who meet each other in the public square, ready to talk, listen and to solve collective problems” (p. 154). Although this conclusion seems rightly to focus on liberalism’s deliberative or conversational core, it encourages us to ask if liberal education can secure all of the goals that Newman seems to anticipate. After all, even if young citizens are encouraged to participate in respectful dialogue about public issues, some might remain intransigent on, say, LGBT or other minority rights. Issues of cultural value or sexual orientation may be so close to their personal morality, or so bound up with inherited beliefs about the right way to live, that their respect for dialogue may not amount to a willingness to engage with all views.

The book shows awareness of these challenges, however, and offers a realistic way forward through forms of education that would help to institutionalize a culture of respectful public reasoning, even when deep disagreements arise. These practices encourage students to think about, talk about and collectively tackle controversial political issues, and are, for Newman, liberalism’s best hope (Chapter 6). The point is engagingly illustrated through the character of Michael, an evangelical Christian who does not view himself as liberal but who accepts the public values of compromise and reciprocity (p. 136). Liberal education encourages us to adopt a generous, open-minded dialogue when it comes to public issues in a very practical sense. Accordingly, the final chapter focuses on suggestions that both home-schooled and public-schooled students in the United States learn deliberative skills through volunteering, Model United Nations, and civic youth initiatives such as Chicago’s Mikva Challenge (p. 149).

The detailed discussion in these chapters is also commendable for squarely tackling the difficult issues that arise from the likely outcomes of liberal education, what civic educationalists have called its “spillover” effect. Students of very conservative social backgrounds would tend to become more liberal in other areas of their lives, in such a way that might weaken the more restrictive or repressive aspects of their faith. Newman concedes that the liberal spillover is exactly the worst-case scenario from the perspective of fundamentalist parents. Yet by appealing again to “domain-differentiation,” and the fact that humans generally can reason differently in various areas of their lives, she wishes to say that these worst fears regarding the complete dissolution of faith are likely to be, in most cases, overstated (p. 136).

This view seems helpful. It avoids the exaggeration of value conflicts that seems to pervade much public discourse about the integration of religions in liberal democracy. However, it also invites a further, final question concerning the book’s concentration on the experience of evangelical Christians in America. Would similar proposals, or a similar pedagogy, be realistic for non-Western liberal democracies or European states?

Experiences of decolonization and immigration in these states may depart crucially from the interdenominational controversies and struggles over church–state separation in America. For instance, in parts of Europe, a stronger form of republican state neutrality historically demanded more categorical religious restraints than in the United States. Newman’s pedagogy might confront different challenges in these contexts.

The rise of anti-Semitic expressions in some European states might prompt further thought about the potential of cosmopolitan liberalisms to protect vulnerable minorities through the public reasoning and debate recommended in *Liberalism in Practice*. For Jewish communities, who historically had to restrain signs of their religious identity in public schools, the issue is perhaps not whether to accept this pedagogy. Rather—although this is a larger debate than the book itself could have addressed—it may be that the effects of this education, and the expression of perhaps problematic views that it might unintentionally “tolerate,” create different quandaries through which to navigate practically.

**Climate Justice in a Non-Ideal World.** By Clare Heyward and Dominic Roser. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. 352p. \$90.00 cloth.  
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In recent years, political theorists and philosophers have begun to question the relevance and primacy of the utopian premises of ideal theory—working assumptions that existing social and political institutions as well as individual actions are guided by principles of justice, and that current environmental and socioeconomic conditions are favorable to establishing or maintaining a fully just society. Whether or not normative judgments about, or prescriptions for, the real world can be meaningfully derived from analyses that assume idealized conditions that rarely, if ever, hold in that world has become a methodological controversy among scholars. Some advocates of nonideal theory merely emphasize the need to account for the context of nonideal circumstances in deriving or applying justice principles, while others use the distinction to reject analytic approaches to political theory altogether.

Referencing the nonideal circumstances against which many normative issues related to climate change arise, in which agents fail to comply with just terms of cooperation in mitigating climate change or to assist those adversely affected by its impacts, and where ecological scarcity threatens to become more than moderate, Clare Heyward and Dominic Roser aim to “merge” the “growing interest in climate justice and the growing calls for non-ideal theory” (p. 9). They take an “ecumenical” (p. 6) approach to the ideal versus nonideal theory