## CONTENTS

Introduction: Where Do You Get Your Values From?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART I. OUR LIBERAL WORLD</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 The Water We Swim In</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 What Is Liberalism?</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Liberalism and the Good Life</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 What Liberals Don’t Get about Liberalism</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Six Ways Liberalism Shapes Us (and Vice Versa)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Pretend Liberals in a Pretend Liberal World</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART II. SOULCRAFT FOR LIBERALS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Spiritual Exercises</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 What Does a Liberal Way of Life Look Like?</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Seventeen Reasons to Be Liberal</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 How to Be Free, Fair, and Fun: Spiritual Exercise 1</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

11 How to Be Sincere and Graceful:  
Spiritual Exercise 2  195

12 How to Keep Calm, Cool, and to Delight in Others:  
Spiritual Exercise 3  215

Conclusion: Requiem for a Liberal Way of Life?  237

Acknowledgments  243

Notes  245

Index  279
I’ll never forget my first Christmas in Australia. I moved to Sydney in 2010 with my wife and our newborn daughter, but for the first several years we took regular trips back to Canada to spend the holidays with family. In 2016, though, we stayed put. On Christmas Day we did the usual things—a long breakfast and the opening of gifts—and then planned to head down to our local beach for a welcome novelty: Christmas in full summer. We slapped on sunscreen, grabbed our boogie boards and thongs (an Aussie word I still can’t get used to; it means flip-flops), and off we went.

I am not a religious man, and even so I still wasn’t prepared for what greeted us. The beach and surrounding area were packed with thousands and thousands of partyers. It was beer, bikinis, Santa hats, and tattooed flesh as far as the eye could see. As I said, I’m not religious, nor I should add prudish, but the thought that came to mind was that this must have been how people from the Middle Ages imagined the fun parts of hell. As if from the brush of Hieronymus Bosch, it was a picture of antsolemnity.
2 INTRODUCTION

In the spirit of “when in Rome” we stayed and enjoyed ourselves. Everyone was in a great mood, there was plenty of good food and even more bad singing (drunken carols and all), and if you paddled out in the ocean about twenty meters, you could survey the spectacle from a quiet distance. We returned home later that afternoon wondering how our folks back in Vancouver would spend their assuredly cold, drizzly day.

The next morning there was a price to pay. Christmas Day had been literally as well as figuratively trashy. Revelers had left behind sixteen tons of garbage. There was so much that the New York Times even reported on it a few days later (go ahead and google “coogee christmas nyt”). As you might expect in our digital age, word quickly got around, and my wife, daughter, and I returned to the scene of the crime to help the community cleanup. Makeshift dump piles were arranged, consisting mostly of food containers, plastic bags, bottles and cans, and also lost or abandoned footwear, clothing, and the aforementioned Santa hats. The mood was a mix of conviviality among the volunteers (most of whom had celebrated on the beach the day before) and low-key grumbling about who was responsible for the mess. A week later, everything was clean and tidy as if it nothing had happened. But ask any local and they’ll remember Christmas 2016, if only because its lasting outcome was an alcohol ban at the beach.

Why begin with this story? Those few days had the truth of caricature, with the good, bad, and ugly of my world on exaggerated display: its friendliness, playful irreverence, antinobbishness, tolerance, and can-do pragmatism, along with its irresponsibility, wastefulness, and potential moral and spiritual emptiness. And it led me to wonder, What kind of society acts like this?

My question may sound judgmental, as if I am issuing a condemnation. “Who acts like this? Barbarous Aussies, that’s who!”
That is not my intention. For starters, stick a lovely beach and gorgeous weather in any major Western city in the Northern Hemisphere, and I doubt Christmas Day would play out much differently. More to the point, my question is sincere. Christmas Day 2016 confused me and raised two related issues.

First, I was curious about the values and behaviors on display. Maybe the mishmash I listed above—friendliness and irresponsibility, tolerance and emptiness, pragmatism and wastefulness, freedom and regulation—wasn’t a mishmash at all. Maybe it was a coherent package of how people, myself included, navigate the world, however distorted and exaggerated on this occasion. Second, I wanted to know where that package came from. Values and behaviors do not fall from the sky. They are formed and sustained within historical traditions, institutional frameworks, and systems of meaning. The big question raised by Christmas Day 2016 was thus, Where did we, where did I, get those values and behaviors from?

The question of where we get our values from is at the heart of my book. What is remarkable is how ill-equipped many of us are to answer it. A hundred or even as recently as fifty years ago, no one would have struggled. Back then, you could have asked most anyone in the world, rich or poor, Western or non-Western, where they get their core values from, and they would have been able to give a clear and direct answer. Most would have pointed to a religion or spiritual tradition; others to an ideology, such as communism; and a handful of eccentrics might have named a philosophy or philosopher.

The situation is different nowadays, mainly due to the decline of religious belief and practice. To consider only the most populous Anglophone liberal democracies, recent surveys of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand show that 30, 53, 32, 40, and 49 percent, respectively, of
citizens in those countries claim no religion. In fact, people who tick the “no religion” box on the census are the fastest-growing population of religious affiliation, or in this case, nonaffiliation.

This book is written primarily, though not exclusively, for those of us without religious affiliation. If that is you—and let’s be frank, as this is a book on ethics and political philosophy published by a university press, the odds are high—I ask you to ponder a question. Put the book down for a moment, dear reader, and ask yourself, “Where do I get my values from?” I am not just talking about your highest-order principles about right and wrong but also your sense of what is good, normal, and worthwhile in life, and if I can put it this way, your general vibe too. What could you point to as the source for that?

I am willing to bet that you had no good answer, or at least nothing immediately ready to hand. I say so with confidence because whenever I’ve pestered my students, friends, and colleagues with this question, they are almost always stumped. Their impulse is to say one of three things: “from my experience,” “from friends and family,” or “from human nature.” But to that, and only endearing myself further, I reply that these are not suitable answers. Personal experience, friends and family, and human nature are situated and formed within wider social, political, and cultural contexts. So I ask again, “What society-or-civilization-sized thing can you point to as the source of your values? I’m talking about the kind of thing that were you Christian, you’d just say, ‘Ah, the Bible,’ or ‘Oh, my church.’”

At this point the conversation tends to peter out. I worry that my interlocutor thinks I’m implying that something is wrong with them, as if they lacked a moral or spiritual compass. The opposite is closer to the truth. It is fascinating how people who seem, as far as I can tell, happy and put together, and do not feel
adrift or unfulfilled, fail to recognize, or even think to ask, from what tradition they learned how to become themselves.

You do not have to be Socrates, who declared philosophy to be the pursuit of self-knowledge, to see this as a problem. It is good and proper for people partying on a beach not to wonder why they are the way they are. It is something else for these same people, in moments of calm reflection, to be more or less in the dark as to where they get their character and moral sensibility from. It is a problem for self-awareness: you may not appreciate how your moral and emotional life hangs together the way it does. It is a problem for self-development: you may not know how to deepen as well as better enjoy the ideals and commitments you already profess, nor see what resources are available to help you do that. And it is a problem for self-preservation: if you happen to live at a time when the tradition that is the key to you is under attack, you may be ignorant of the personal or even existential stakes of that situation.

I believe that most of my readers should identify liberalism as the source of their values: not just of their political opinions, but of who they are through and through. Liberalism, to recall my earlier phrase, is that society-or-civilization-sized thing that may well underlie who you (and I, and we) are in all walks of life, from the family to workplace, from friendship to enmity, from humor to outrage, and everything in between.

Over the next few pages, I will introduce this argument in a patient and careful manner. I will specify what I mean by liberalism, identify its principles and ideals, account for how they shape our sense of self, explain how we might cultivate these commitments, and suggest why that might be a good thing to do. For now, though, let me return to Christmas Day 2016. Suppose a reveler had noticed that I looked a bit dazed. Further suppose, improbably, that they had asked me what was on my
mind. Like them, I would have had a couple of drinks. Tipsy and emboldened, I might have said something like,

Hey, maybe you don’t know the source of your morality, but I do; it’s liberalism, and it can be a great way to live. The good news is that it’s all around us, already in our bones, and we don’t have to go looking for some ancient or distant piece of wisdom for how to live well. We just need to double down and take seriously what we already have. The bad news is that it’s under attack right now and may well be displaced as the default morality of our time. That sucks for a lot of reasons, but a big one is that should it happen, our source of self can’t be taken for granted anymore. It’ll suffer the same fate, say, as Christianity in the Western world: a viable option, sure, but just one of many, and no longer the background of our world.

Had I given this speech (nay, sermon), I would have blushed the next morning. Among its many embarrassments is the lack of liberal virtues. There’s not much modesty in telling my interlocutor who they are deep down. Nor is there appreciation of pluralism in presuming they don’t already subscribe to some other worldview. Worst is the impression of moralism it gives off. Outside forces seem to be the only threat to liberalism, rather than potential limitations in the doctrine itself or a failure of so-called liberal people to live up to its demands. Illiberalism, it would seem, is other people.

Despite all of that, I want to let it stand. Like the day itself, my little speech has the truth of caricature. The suggestion I put to my readers is that liberalism may be at the root of all things us. What we find funny, outrageous, or meaningful; how we comport ourselves in friendship and romance; and the ideals that we set for ourselves as citizens, professionals, neighbors, and family members—maybe all of these things, from
seemingly distinctive spheres of life, draw on one and the same source. The goal of this book is to offer an integrated account of a way of living that is prominent and available today. Success in this endeavor depends on the persuasiveness of my depiction of liberalism and whether it clicks with the sense that readers have of themselves. But at the outset, I’ll say this. If you struggle to identify a source for your values, yet feel skeptical of the suggestion that liberalism may be it, I have one more question to keep in mind while reading this book: Honestly, what else do you have?
INDEX

Anderson, Amanda, 251n12
Aristotle, 134; on objectivity in science, 143–44; on a shared conception of the good life, 65
Augustine, Saint: and misanthropy, 43; Pierre Hadot on, 136; on a shared conception of the good life, 65
Aurelius, Marcus: Pierre Hadot on, 139; spiritual exercises of, 142
Australia, 34, 90; and Christmas Day, 2016, 1–7; and commitment to a “fair go,” 26–27, 155; inequality in, 171; irreligion of, 3, 231–32
autonomy, 79, 271n18. See also existential perks of a liberal way of life
Baron Cohen, Sacha, 100. See also Borat!; Psenicska, Mike
Beaumont, Gustave de, on inequality in the United States, 50–51. See also Tocqueville, Alexis de
Bergson, Henri, 32; on the nature of problems, 254n17
Berlin, Isaiah, 119, 264n15; and criticism of positive liberty, 145; on value pluralism, 269n1
Biden, Joe, 21, 38, 257n12
Billy on the Street, 27–28. See also Eichner, Billy
bin Salman, Mohammed (prince), and public cruelty, 92–93, 257n12
Bird Box (film), 67–69
Black Lives Matter, as a liberal social movement, 248n14
Bloom, Allan, and critique of Rawls, 248n15, 266n7
Bodin, Jean, on pluralism and public reason, 228–30
Borat! (film), and tolerance, 215–16, 220–22. See also Baron Cohen, Sacha; Psenicska, Mike
Breitbart, 34; and public reason, 222–23, 232–33, 275n11. See also conservatism
capitalism: liberalism’s entanglement with, 117–21, 127, 239; Rawls on, 262–63n22; as a threat to living well, 49, 53. See also liberalism and care of the self, liberalism and, 171–75, 269n11. See also existential perks of a liberal way of life
Carlin, George, on swear words, 88–89, 257n5
Cavell, Stanley, 32; as comprehensive liberal, 255n32; and speaking for others, 257n2
Chappelle, Dave, 15; and controversy over The Closer, 258n22; and the state of comedy today, 101–3. See also comedy
cheerfulness. See under existential perks of a liberal way of life
Christianity, 6, 17–18, 209; as combined with liberalism, 17–18, 76–78, 162;
demandingness of, 114–16, 120, 128, 139; as derided by liberals, 231–32;
John Locke on, 255n27; and virtue of liberalism, 47–48. See also religion
classical liberalism, 20; as invented in the twentieth century, 39–40, 249n4
Clinton, Hillary: on “basket of deplo-
rables,” 41; as a liberal villain, 249n18
Cohen, G. A., on social justice needing personal transformation, 128–29
Cold War liberalism, 20, 119, 140
comedy, and liberalism, 89–90, 100–103, 188–89, 250n6, 258n24. See also
Chappelle, Dave; Gadsby, Hannah;
Good Place, The; Knope, Leslie;
Schur, Michael
comprehensive liberalism, 78–80; as criticized by political liberalism, 72–75; as a ghost story by political liberalism, 80–82. See also liberalism; perfectionism; political liberalism
conservatism: on liberalism as spiritually hollow, 98, 147, 265n1; as understanding liberalism better than liberals, 11–13, 60–63, 81; on using state power to fight culture wars, 256n33
Constant, Benjamin, 21, 32, 49
cruelty, liberal aversion to, 43, 91–94, 103, 250n11. See also misanthropy;
Shklar, Judith

Davidson, Arnold, on conversations with Pierre Hadot, 140
de Maistre, Joseph, 55–56
democracy: and illiberalism, 90, 117, 160; and meritocracy, 106; Pierre

Hadot on 143–45; and pluralism
72–75, 128–29; self-conception of citizens in, 160–62; and tension with early liberalism, 41–42, 45–59, 250n6, 251n13. See also liberalism; Tocqueville, Alexis de
Deneen, Patrick, 252n27, 256n33,
265n1. See also fish, old and young
difference principle. See under Rawls, John
Dijin, Annelien de, 251n13
Dombrowski, Daniel, 271n12
Douthat, Ross, 98, 204, 265n1. See also conservatism
Dworkin, Ronald, 267n13; as a critic of Rawls, 128–29; and the liberalism of individual rights, 246n2

Eichner, Billy (Billy on the Street, TV show), 27–28
Epictetus, 138
equality: of opportunity, 105, 121–23, 181, 220; as principle of democracy, 46, 52–53, 221, as unrealized in liberal democracy, 34, 105, 107–8, 118, 187–88, 194, 238–39. See also fairness; generosity; reciprocity
Erikson, Erik, on shame, 211
existential perks of a liberal way of life, 134–35, 175, 179, 241–42; and autonomy, 175, 183–87, 270n6; and avoidance of hypocrisy, 176, 209–10; and cheerfulness, 178, 233–34; and civility and coolness, 177, 232–33; and delight in others, 177, 230–31; and diminished frustration and rage, 176, 191–93; and diminished pride and snobbery, 175, 187–88, 271n18; and fun, irony, and playfulness, 175, 188–89; and gracefulness,
177, 183, 213–14; and gratitude, 176, 193–94; and humility, 176, 210–11; and impartiality, 175, 183–85, 271n12; and redemption, 178, 234–36; and self-coherence, 176, 208–10; and stalwartness and self-restraint, 176, 190–91; and tolerance, 177, 189, 231–32; and unity of the self, 177, 211–14

fairness, as a core virtue of a liberal way of life, 147, 165–68, 175, 206, 231, 248n15, 262n16. See also equality; existential perks of a liberal way of life; generosity; reciprocity

fish, old and young, 11–19, 60–63, 81. See also Deneen, Patrick; political liberalism; Wallace, David Foster

Forrester, Katrina, 71–72

Foucault, Michel, on care of the self, 172–73

freedom: as claim-making on public institutions, 161, 164–65; as a core virtue of a liberal way of life, 11, 21, 79, 105–6, 134, 147, 159–68; as forming and revising one’s conception of the good life, 161, 164–65; as self-direction, 161–62, 164–65; as undermined by cruelty, 91–93. See also autonomy; existential perks of a liberal way of life

Freud, Sigmund, 32, 200; and moral psychology, 149, 152

Gadsby, Hannah, 89–90

Gaus, Gerald, on limits of public reason, 225

generosity: as a core virtue of a liberal way of life, 18, 55, 128–29, 224, 236; and etymological connection to liberality, 47–49; failure of liberals to live up to, 101, 125, 213. See also existential perks of a liberal way of life; fairness; reciprocity

gracefulness. See under existential perks of a liberal way of life

Hadot, Pierre, 22, 30, 33, 135–36, 186, 245n15; on democracy, 143–44; on dialogue, 217–18; as inspiration for Michel Foucault, 172; on philosophy as a way of life, 30–31, 135–39, 157–58, 185–86, 264n17, 264n111; as sidekick to reading Rawls, 33, 145; on Socrates, 196–97; on spiritual exercises, 31–33, 139–45. See also spiritual exercises

Hägglund, Martin: as comprehensive liberal, 255n32; on secular faith, 250n6

Harsanyi, John, 189

Hart, David Bentley, on demandingness of Christianity, 120

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich: as modern philosopher, 31; on reconciliation, 193

Herberg, Will, on the American way of life, 252n33

Hobbes, Thomas, on social and political stability, 65–66

Hobhouse, Leonard, 248n16

Hobson, John Atkinson, 248n16

horror movies, 258n21

Hudson, Tom (The Onion, satirical newspaper), as the worst liberal, 195–99, 207, 209, 211, 213

humility. See under existential perks of a liberal way of life
Ignatius. See Loyola, Ignatius of
impartiality. See under existential perks
of a liberal way of life
incels, 111–12, 260n39. See also pornography
Ishiguro, Kazuo, 30
Kant, Immanuel, 21, 37, 66; on the
aristocracy of all, 127; as a compre-
hensive liberal, 78–79, 81; as a
modern philosopher, 30–31
Karen (meme), 191–92
Khashoggi, Jamal, 92
Kierkegaard, Søren, 19, 145; and attack
on Christendom, 114–17, 170.
See also Christianity; liberaldom
Knope, Leslie (Parks and Recreation,
TV show): as a liberal hero, 36–43,
58–59, 146, 250n6; on love and friend-
ship, 108. See also democracy; Parks
and Recreation; Schur, Michael
Kovaleski, Serge, as mocked by
Donald Trump, 93
Kristol, Irving, 250n9
Larmore, Charles: as cofounder of
political liberalism, 253n3; on the
limits of public reason, 225
Lear, Jonathan, on the single rule of
psychoanalysis, 200–201
LEGO people, 75–82, 133, 255n31.
See also political liberalism
liberaldom, 18–19, 33–35, 104, 128, 155,
168; contemporary liberal democracies
as 117–18, 124–25, 146, 190–91;
definition of, 117; how to live well in,
119–20, 134–35, 145, 170, 174, 262n16;
as self-sabotaging for liberals, 129,
170–75, 178, 213; as unstable, 242. See
also Kierkegaard, Søren; meritocracy
liberalism: based on reciprocity, 29,
146–47; deficiencies of, 169–70,
246n2; definition of, 11–12, 20–22,
27–28; etymology of, 47–49; and
democracy, 45–59, 90–91, 251n13; as
a fair system of cooperation, 24–30,
33–35, 120, 159, 186, 248n14; fate of,
238–42; as good and satisfying way
of life, 18–19, 47–59, 69–71, 128–29,
170–78; historical origins of, 44–47;
and liberaldom, 33–35, 117–21, 239;
non-teleological nature of, 29,
159–60; as omnipresent (the water we
swim in), 11–19, 80–82, 84, 85–113, 133,
148, 155–57; personal freedom in, 29,
159–65; and political activism, 173–75;
radicalism of, 28–29, 93–94, 120–21,
124–25, 153–54; and/ as religion, 184,
213–14, 235–36; as self-help 13–14,
119–20, 128–29, 134–35; as source of
personal values, 5–7, 157–58, 240;
without metaphysics, 95–100, 236,
266n2
Locke, John, 21, 36, 66, 94, 246n2; and
misanthropy, 44–45; on tolerance,
255n27
Louis, C.K., on the advantages of being
white, 182
Loyola, Ignatius of, the spiritual
exercises of, 265n20
Luther, Martin, 116
Macedo, Stephen, 222; on executive
virtues 191; on liberal virtues, 268n25;
on Locke and tolerance, 255n27
Macron, Emmanuel, 21
Maistre, Joseph de, 55–56
Markovits, Daniel, on meritocracy, 106–7
Marx, Karl, 116, 257n12; on liberals, 178,
270n14
McWhorter, John, on swear words, 90–91
meritocracy: and contemporary por-nography, 108–12, 260n39; and liberalism, 32, 103–8, 117, 121. See also liberaldom
Meyer, Selina (Veep, TV show), 250n6
Mill, John Stuart, 32, 37, 164; as a comprehensive liberal, 78–79, 81; and democracy, 45, 49, 54; and liberalism of personal freedom, 21, 127, 246n2; on love and friendship, 109
Milton, John, on love and friendship, 109
misanthropy, as founding attitude and emotion of liberalism, 41–45, 47, 51–55, 251n12. See also Shklar, Judith
Mohr, Melissa, on swear words, 88–89
Montaigne, Michel de: on hatred of cruelty, 95; on laughter, 258n24; and the liberalism of fear, 21; and misanthropy, 42
Montesquieu, Charles, 170; and the liberalism of fear, 21, 92; and misanthropy, 42–46
Moyn, Samuel, on Cold War liberalism, 119
neoliberalism, 20, 104, 119. See also liberaldom
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 43, 116, 189
Nussbaum, Martha, 32, 204; on philosophy as a way of life, 264n7; on the role of emotions for political stability, 249n24
Obama, Barack, 38; on clinging to guns and religion, 41–42, on meritocracy, 259n28
Office, The (TV show), 15, 37
original position, 32, 176, 179, 270n6; and autonomy, 185–87; when done in bad faith, 189–90; and final paragraph of A Theory of Justice, 182–84; and how to do, 180–81; and impartiality, 184–85; and intergenerational justice, 271n12; as personally transformative, 184–94; See also existential perks of a liberal way of life; spiritual exercises

Parks and Recreation (TV show), 36–42, 108, 250n6. See also Knope, Leslie; Schur, Michael
Pascal, Blaise, 53
Paul, Saint, 116, 141
perfectionism, 61, 74, 119, 160, 181. See also comprehensive liberalism; political liberalism
Pinker, Steven, on the N-word, 89
Plato, 118, 170, 217
pluralism: of liberal democratic societies, 71–75; threat liberalism poses to, 147, 256n33; and tolerance, 103, 155, 192, 228–34. See also political liberalism
polarization, 218, 223–24, 232
political liberalism: on comprehensive liberalism, 78–80; and failure to see liberalism as way of life, 63, 77–78, 80–82, 147, 256n33; and LEGO people, 75–78; as the orthodoxy of contemporary political philosophy, 61–62, 74–75; and Rawls, 22, 63–64, 69, 128–29; as a response to the problem of pluralism, 71–75. See also comprehensive liberalism; liberalism; perfectionism; Rawls, John.
Pornhub.com, 16, 109–10, 260n38
pornography (and step-incest pornography), 16, 109–12, 260n39
Psenicska, Mike (Borat!, movie), 215–16, 220–22, 230
public reason, 32, 177–78, 208, 216, 217; as civic friendship, 223; content of, 220–22; and justification of political power, 219, 227–28; as the mother tongue of liberals, 224–26; and tolerance, 231–32; as a way of listening, 226, 228–34. See also existential perks of a liberal way of life; spiritual exercises
Putin, Vladimir, and public cruelty, 92–93
Queer Eye (TV show), 126–27. See also Thomas-Hockaday, Jereka
Ramanujan, A. K., 141
Rawls, John, 22–24, 31, 239–40, 271n18; biography of, 165–67, 262n25; and care of the self, 172–75; on comprehensive liberalism, 78–82; on corrosive emotions, 33, 128, 173; and definition of liberalism, 27; on the difference principle, 123–29, 167–68; on fraternity and solidarity, 122; on ideal theory, 174, 261n10; methodology of, 26–30, 120–21, 140–41, 148–49, 247n13, 248n15, 248n16, 266n3; as a moralist, 23–24, 32–33; on orientation, 203–5; on the original position, 179–94, 270n4; on personal transformation, 23–24, 158, 182–84, 268n24; on political liberalism, 71–84, 253n3, 267n22; against pridefulness, 187; on public reason, 220–36; and Rawls studies, 71–72, 253n14; on reasonable and unreasonable people, 170–72, 230, 232, 275n7; on reciprocity as central liberal value, 150–51; on reconciliation, 193–94; on redemption, 234–36; on reflective equilibrium, 197–214; on self-respect, 90–91, 153–57; on the sense of justice, 66–67, 154–55; on social and political stability, 63–76, 149–50, 173, 256n33; on society as a fair system of cooperation, 24–30, 117, 148, 262n22; and spiritual exercises, 32–33, 140, 184. See also Theory of Justice, A
reciprocity, as key liberal value, 29, 146–47, 150–57, 169, 175–77, 231–33, 262n16. See also fairness; freedom; generosity; liberalism redemption. See under existential perks of a liberal way of life reflective equilibrium, 32, 176, 179; as conducive to gracefulness, 213–14; definition of, 198; and how to do, 201–8; leading to self-coherence, 198–201, 208–13; narrow vs. wide, 204–6. See also existential perks of a liberal way of life; spiritual exercises
religion, 139, 156, 226; on decline in Western liberal democracies, 3–4, 147; liberalism as adequate as, 17–19, 97–100, 213–14, 235–36; Rawls on, 228–29, 234–35; Shklar on, 82–83; and swear words, 88; and transcendence, 94, 98, 159, 266n2. See also Christianity; spiritual exercises
Roosevelt, Eleanor, 32, 264n15
Roosevelt, Theodore, 40
Rorty, Richard, 32; on irony, 189
Rosenblatt, Helena, and the history of liberalism, 40, 48–49
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 66, 81, 156–57, 164; and developmental psychology in *Emile*, 151–53, 267n14
Sandel, Michael: and critique of Rawls, 268n29; on meritocracy, 111
Scanlon, T.M., 99
Schmitt, Carl, on polarization, 232
Schur, Michael: and *The Good Place*, 95, 99–100; and *Parks and Recreation*, 37–38
self-coherence. See under existential perks of a liberal way of life
Shklar, Judith, 32, 119, 264n15; on cruelty, 92–93, 250n11; on horizontalization of morality, 94–95, 97; and letter to Rawls, 82–84; on misanthropy, 42–43, 45, 251n12; on snobbery, 187–88. See also cruelty; misanthropy
Skripal, Sergei, 92
Smith, Adam, 36, 191
society, as fair system of cooperation. See liberalism
Socrates, 5; and Kierkegaard, 116; on self-knowledge, 196–200, 208
spiritual exercises, 19, 135, 184–85, 239, 265n20; definition of, 141–42; Hadot on, 31, 139–45, 217, 265n23; in liberalism, 31–34, 147, 168, 175, 176, 179, 184, 197, 202–3, 208, 210–12, 216–17, 226, 228, 234–35. See also Hadot, Pierre; original position; public reason; Rawls, John; reflective equilibrium
Spurr, Barry, and slurs, 85–86
Srinivasan, Amia, on incels, 111–12
Staël, Germaine de, 32, 49
Stewart, Jon, on comedy, 100
Streep, Meryl, on cruelty, 93
swear words, 86–91, 103
Taylor, Charles, on liberalism as spiritually unsatisfying, 266n2
*Theory of Justice, A* (Rawls): as Bildungsroman, 150–57, 267n14; final paragraph of, 23–24, 182–84, 213–14; fundamental idea of, 24–25, 34, 247n12; handwritten epigraph in, 267n13; and ideal theory, 174; importance of Part III of, 129, 148–49, 158; Rawls’s criticism of, 63–64, 70–71, 76, 80; on social and political stability, 66–67; success of, 22, 64, 247n13. See also, original position; Rawls, John; reflective equilibrium
Thomas-Hockaday, Jereka (*Queer Eye, TV show*), 126–27, 146
Tocqueville, Alexis de, 32, 39; on the collapse of the ancient regime, 237–38; on conformity, 46, 53–54, 57; on generosity, 127; on individualism, 46, 52–53, 57, 106; on liberalism as managing democracy, 45–59; on materialism, 46, 53, 57; on townships, 55–59. See also democracy; liberalism
tolerance, 2, 3, 28, 48, 102–3, 177, 189, 215–16, 231–32, 255n27. See also under existential perks of a liberal way of life
Trilling, Lionel, 32, 119, 264n15
Trump, Donald, 34, 93
*Veep* (TV show), 250n6
Waldron, Jeremy, on justification, 219
Wallace, David Foster, 11, 192–93. See also fish, old and young
Westover, Tara, and meaning of freedom for liberals, 162–65
Wilde, Oscar, 52