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Understanding Compromise and its Demands on Political Education

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Life is full of compromises. You can't afford the latest iPad Air so you go for the Tesco Hudl2. No time to swim and meet the paper deadline, so no swim today. The whole chain of compromises involved in planning the (curiously named?) family fun day is notorious. We are familiar in our personal lives with settling for second best, or even worse.

This paper does not set out to cover the whole gamut of compromises – non-moral ones, moral ones, those in specific areas like law and medical ethics (see Archard, 2012 for a broader focus). My focus is political compromise. It covers groups in conflict over disputed territory like Russia and the Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, and Northern Ireland, which is often held up as an admirable example, where after years of bloody conflict a series of compromises ended in the Good Friday Agreement. It also includes coalitions between parties in democratic government, like that in the UK between the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

Political compromise, though, for all its importance all over the world, and particularly in democratic societies, has been underexplored in political theory and philosophy until recently (Fumurescu, 2013, Gutmann and Thompson, 2012, Margalit, 2010). Building on this and earlier work (Pennock and Chapman, 1979), this paper starts a discussion about its place in political education. But before getting down to details, two aspects of compromise in relation to political education need to be distinguished. The first is to do with behaviour, and specifically with whether there is a disposition to seek compromise, and the second with understanding. I say a little about the first issue, before concentrating on the role of understanding.

A disposition to compromise?

Could there be a disposition to compromise? Many have emphasised (Callan, 1997, Sockett, 2011, White, 1996) the importance of dispositions in moral education and of democratic dispositions in education for democracy. We might encourage children to be cooperative, generous, and attentive to others' needs and these admirable attitudes might be called upon in a compromise situation, but none of them is, as such, a disposition to compromise. Gutmann and Thompson talk about politicians adopting compromising and uncompromising mindsets but they see these as often shifting with different issues and not as 'embedded in the character of the individual' (2012, p 65).

There is however, I shall claim, a disposition involved in a good compromise, even if it is not a disposition to compromise.

Whatever we say about behaviour, one thing is clear. Students have to understand what is involved in making compromises, certainly in their own lives, but also in the political context. For citizens to achieve a necessary depth of understanding about political compromise – the focus of this paper – demands extensive contributions from informal, school and public education. By 'public education' I mean here the promotion of understanding amongst the public by print and electronic media journalists, academics, writers and filmmakers, offering insight, in this instance, into general and specific issues about compromise. I give a sketch of the wide-ranging nature of these three demands by providing an educational commentary on them as they arise in examining various kinds of political compromises.

Understanding deals and flawed compromises

First, let us look at an argument between two children that reveals some of the complexities of the topic, not least the discontinuities between personal and political compromises in their demands on education. Luke, a 7-year-old boy, wants to find the Seattle Space Needle on the shared family computer, because he has just built a Lego

version of it. His sister, Daisy, aged 4, wants him to put 'Beautiful, Beautiful Weddings' into Google. Ideally they would both like to spend all their time before school on their preferred searches but they can't. So negotiating and bargaining take place.

A closer look at two scenarios within this example sheds light on three resolutions to conflict situations that differ from, or fall short of, a good compromise.

1. If Luke offers Daisy the chance to play with his Star Wars toy whilst he has sole use of the computer, there could well be a win-win solution to the conflict. Perhaps Daisy is happy to forget about her search for 'Beautiful, beautiful weddings' to get her hands on this treasured toy which is usually kept out of her reach. This is a problem-solving solution to the conflict, not a compromise. Both parties have gained over the status quo and neither side makes a sacrifice; whereas a classic compromise involves an underlying and continuing conflict of values (e.g. in conflict over territory with historic significance for both parties) and essentially involves shared sacrifice (Gutmann and Thompson, 2012, p12).

2. A different scenario. Luke offers sister Daisy the Star Wars toy, in return for sole use of the computer. But Daisy doesn't like Star Wars much and anyway the toy is no longer completely functional. Even if Daisy accepts the broken Star Wars toy after some protests, it is not a good compromise. In this case, Luke is not acknowledging Daisy's equal right to use the shared computer. He is fobbing her off. Daisy is involved in a *shoddy* compromise. In a shoddy compromise phoney goods are exchanged for real valuables (Margalit, 2010, p 3, 83ff), in this case a broken toy for time at computer.

Or, given Luke's superior literacy and numeracy skills, Daisy may find herself accepting another poor deal. Luke suggests that he use the computer now and tomorrow but then 'after two sleeps' Daisy can have it for a really long time – six hundred seconds. This is a *shabby* compromise, meaning by this an exploitative one, which takes advantage of the vulnerability of the weak party (Margalit, 2010, p4). When Daisy comes to understand what this means, she is justified in reneging on it.

So, Daisy and Luke, from different standpoints, have first-hand experience in the personal context of a win-win solution, a shoddy compromise and a shabby compromise.

Parents or other carers may overhear these negotiations and interpret for the children just what they are doing or suffering. In the first case (1), they may say that it is fine to negotiate and praise both children for doing that rather than quarrelling and pushing and shoving to get in front of the computer. In the second case (2), Luke will have brought home to him that he is not acknowledging that Daisy has just as much right to time at the computer as he has. He is refusing to respect her as an equal. He knows he should but is using wily tricks to exploit the situation to his own advantage. Thus both, with help from adults, are developing an understanding of bargaining and negotiating, as well as what is involved in a shoddy or shabby deal. But they have not yet experienced a good compromise. – Or, of course, a political compromise, although they are even at this early age approaching the foothills of understanding this.

A good compromise

Political compromise is a practice that has developed, alongside other democratic practices (for instance, majority voting, a legal opposition, an independent judiciary, fixed term governments) as an attempt to realise the ideals of respect, freedom and justice that characterise democracy. Its advocates would not claim that it perfectly

embodies those ideals but that it attempts to realise them in conflict situations and is capable of further refinement. I argue that informal education, for instance in the family as with Luke and Daisy, school and public education can play a large part in understanding and promoting this practice.

So what are the three central features of a good compromise that attempts to realise democratic values?

1. Importantly, it means treating the other person as an equal in the bargaining situation and acknowledging that their interests are legitimate (Gutmann and Thompson, 2012, p60; Mowlam, 2003, p189). Mutual recognition and seeing others' claims to resources as legitimate are presuppositions of compromise. Mutual recognition is lacking in the Luke and Daisy case and that is why they are not involved in a good compromise. Each needs to respect the other as a negotiating partner. On any particular occasion, this is easier where there already exists a background of taken-for-granted respect (and love or affection) for the other. This can be assumed, even given the usual amount of sibling rivalry, in the Luke and Daisy case. It is harder in a society with little background trust between different groups, where if people have to have dealings with other groups, they try to extract as much benefit as they can within the law (as in Callan's thought experiment, see Callan, 1997, p1-2).

It is harder still where people are engaged in violent conflict. There may need to be compromise(s) *before* the substantive negotiations about the real dispute between the parties can begin. We are familiar with this slow, awkward process that often begins with a statement by a government that it will not negotiate with a 'terrorist organisation'. Before negotiations can begin each party needs to reach the stage of recognising the other as a legitimate partner. This is hard. It may mean recognising that those who have been enemies until now have legitimate concerns and need to be treated no longer as enemies but as partners. There are many examples, from Basque separatists and the Spanish government, Israel and Palestine, and the Unionists and Nationalists in Northern Ireland. It is particularly difficult if the protagonists have been using the language of Good and Evil to describe the relationship between themselves and their opponents. Singer notes that President Bush used the term 'evil', usually as a noun, in about 30 per cent of his speeches (319 in number) between his inauguration in 2001 and mid-2003 (quoted by Coady, 2010, p 40-41). This language, used at the time of the second Iraq war, suggests that compromise was not in the President's sights.

How might implacable enemies be brought to the negotiating table? In many cases they need to accept that there must be an end to armed struggle, or at least a ceasefire. In our homely example, Daisy, cross about her shabby treatment, has to stop hitting Luke with her school bag for a compromise to be possible. Bombing the other side or hitting them is not showing respect. A tempering of language on each side will be another step towards a more respectful relationship. Generally, if background respect exists between parties, just basic reminders about the need for respect (from parents, teachers, or, in the political case, officials facilitating the compromise process) will often be enough to set up the conditions for a good compromise. The less background respect, the greater will be the need for imaginative, resourceful work on creating a more full-bodied respect for others as equals.

Respect can be fostered by informal education in the family and elsewhere, and by education in schools and colleges. To support a society in which compromise is possible, parents need to encourage respect between family members, and towards friends and neighbours; and educational institutions need to reinforce a taken-for-granted respect between their students. This is hardly a surprising suggestion. It is

what is expected in democratic societies as a matter of course. Recently referred to by an Education Secretary in the UK as a British value, respect is a value underlying all democratic practices – one person, one vote, for instance (BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-29627391>).

In a society where democratic respect falters, educational institutions can be active in reinforcing it (encouraging patterns of respectful behaviour in classroom, dinner hall and playground which become 'what we do'). These efforts will need to be more self-conscious where there are deep rifts between social groups (whether or not those groups are represented in the school or college community), and could involve anti-bullying campaigns, work on stereotyping, name-calling and so on. Building mutual respect between sworn enemies in different societies (e.g. Israel and Palestine) demands even more strenuous and imaginative efforts in school and public education, perhaps involving modest joint practical projects (see Cockburn, 1998). I suggested earlier that there may be no disposition to compromise as such, but respect for others as equals is a vital disposition for the practice of compromise. Alongside the growing understanding of deals, negotiations and compromises, it will need to become part of the dispositional groundwork for good compromises in society and between societies.

2. Now for a second feature of a good compromise. Let us assume that, however achieved, the parties respectfully recognise each other as legitimate partners. Here we come to the substance of the dispute. What Luke and Daisy want above all is sole use of the computer. This is an example of what Margalit calls the dream scenario (2010, p45f). In the Luke and Daisy case, the dream scenario for both is that the other relinquishes the computer completely and finds something else to do.

In the political world, the dream scenario is the ideal solution that both parties have in mind at the start of a dispute. Put schematically, the dream scenario for Group A in a case of disputed territory might be that Group B gives up all claims to the disputed land, recognises the historic right of Group A to it, and just leaves. The dream scenario for Group B is the reverse. Neither is going to happen. Through the lens of the dream scenario, we can look, again schematically, at the position of Unionists and Republicans in Northern Ireland before the talks to resolve the conflict began. For Unionists the dream scenario was that the Republicans give up on their goal of a united Ireland, cease to fight for it, and recognise that Northern Ireland should remain firmly part of the United Kingdom. For Republicans the dream scenario was that Unionists give up on their goal of keeping Northern Ireland part of the United Kingdom, disarm their paramilitary groups and agree to a united Ireland.

These dream scenarios are rightly so called. They are not achievable. If pursued in an intransigent way, they lead to stalemate and eventually conflict. A compromise solution has to involve what Margalit calls 'giving up on the dream' (2010, p.46). The parties need to set aside their dreams and sort out a feasible agreement, a second-best solution for both of them.

It is not easy, though, to give up on dreams and there is something like a double standard here. Imagine that I, an Irish Republican, am in dispute with you, a Unionist. I see your dream – of remaining permanently part of the UK – as an illusion. It is just a dream. You sacrifice little in giving it up. Instead, you free yourself from an illusion and begin to have a more realistic attitude to the situation. This must be good.

Giving up on my dream of a united Ireland is different. You call it, rather derisively, my dream, but I see it as not so much a dream as an aspiration. I accept that it is not immediately achievable but it might, with stamina and determination, be achievable in

the not too distant future. I need to hold fast to it and not give up at the first hint of a reverse.

So what might bring people to give up on their cherished dreams/aspirations? They may do this for a big prize – a lasting peace after years of conflict, as in Northern Ireland. To return to the homely example of Luke and Daisy, both may conclude, after thinking it over, that shared time at the computer, timed by Mum on the reliable kitchen timer, may be the best solution. Better to have an assured 15 minutes with no pushing and shoving and no time lost in fruitless bargaining than to hold out for 30 minutes of sole use, which neither has a realistic chance of getting.

But there are complications in the real world that do not exist in the world of the two face-to-face negotiators in the kitchen. First, Luke and Daisy (apart from being in the affectionate relationship of family members) might be described as negotiating about interests – time at the computer – whilst sharing values – like fairness. They are negotiating within the same value framework. Neither of them holds a principle or doctrine that, were they to allow it to be overridden or in some way diminished in resolving the dispute, would involve a loss of integrity. Neither is in the position of the person who cannot face no longer being the person of principle they have always felt themselves to be and whom others have come to rely on. Neither of them is, for example, in the position of an Ian Paisley whose reiterated ‘No,’ ‘Never,’ ‘Not an inch’ utterances were familiar in the years before the Good Friday agreement (BBC Obituary, 2014). Second, and connectedly, Luke and Daisy are each negotiating on their own behalf. But political chief negotiators, like Paisley, represent a whole body of supporters who rely on them to pursue their agreed aims. For the sake of a peace settlement the chief negotiators may be reluctantly persuaded, after months of complex to-and-fro argument, to give up on their aspirations (e.g. of a united country or regaining lost territory) and be prepared to negotiate. Long struggles with conscience over what would be involved in laying aside a principle for the greater good of peace may have enabled them to come to a decision which they feel is an honourable one in the circumstances. But some of their supporters will say their leaders have betrayed them and the cause for which they have fought. Their historic struggles, the hardships they have endured, all their comrades lost, have been for nothing. Their leaders have sold out (Mowlam, 2003, p142).

This suggests that, whilst negotiators need careful mentoring in the skills of negotiation, education of their supporters is needed too. Without this there is little hope of a stable compromise because breakaway groups will feel it their duty to undo the settlement. The negotiators have a vital role in the education of their supporters because they are in a good position to explain just what is at stake and why they take the sacrifice of some elements of their position, even some matters of principle, to be demanded. In so doing, they could find a resource in the discussions of the complexities of conflicts of value familiar from philosophers like Berlin and Williams. Sometimes where incommensurable values conflict, overriding one principle in favour of another may be deeply regrettable, but necessary. Margalit, influenced by Berlin, talks in these terms of the sacrifice of justice for peace (Margalit 2010, especially pages 79-88), relating it to Keynes’s thinking about peace and justice in 1919. In *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* Keynes says that the task of the Versailles peace conference should have been to satisfy justice ‘but no less to re-establish life and to heal wounds’ (Keynes, 1920, p23). Margalit would replace the ‘but no less’ by ‘but even more’. This does not mean that Margalit rejects the value of justice. He is firmly committed to it, but judges that there can be situations where peace is the more vital need. But supporters will need to be convinced of that and their leaders are in the best position to do this.

Beyond supporters, though, the wider public needs to be reliably informed about the issues surrounding a compromise made in their name. Today's educators in this explanatory role might include not only scholars and academics but also journalists in print and digital media. We are used to popular newspapers and other media mining political events for 'sensational' stories – apparent rifts in leadership, inappropriately dressed female politicians. But, more optimistically, we can think of the educational efforts of newspapers like *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian*. In the UK we had a glimpse of the possibilities of public education by media in the months of debate before the 2014 Scottish referendum about the future of Scotland and the UK. A range of media commentators enthused voters to explore the issues, explained complex matters, and exposed blatant propaganda lies and scaremongering tactics. Similarly, in a compromise process, independent media commentators can set out what is at stake, subject it to critical scrutiny and encourage the public at large to engage with the issues.

3. The third feature of a good compromise is recognition of mutual sacrifice. Chief political negotiators need to have the significance of their dreams/aspirations recognised, as well as what it means to them – and their supporters – to give them up. Others need to recognise that they are making huge sacrifices.

This recognition is connected to the respect underlying a good compromise. Part of showing respect for the other party is attempting to understand what the sacrifices the compromise demands mean in concrete terms to them. Recognising these sacrifices cannot be just a matter of uttering words of sympathy that cost nothing. It typically requires deeds. It may mean offering significant concessions of one's own. This might involve (unpalatable) exchange of prisoner agreements (as in Northern Ireland and between Israel and Palestine).

Recognition of sacrifice makes demands on public education. It is hard for a population that has suffered terrorist attacks to accept that a release of 'convicted murderers' is part of the price they have to pay for peace. Responsible public discussion of the issues and of the need in politics, as, in life generally, to accept second-best, or even worse, solutions can help. Mo Mowlam controversially met prisoners on both sides in Northern Ireland in the course of brokering the Good Friday Agreement. Later the same day she visited a victims' group where some people said 'We don't like what you've done, but if it keeps the peace process going, if it stops other families going through what we have, then for God's sake keep going' (Mowlam, 2003 p190). Such meetings, which gave people the chance to understand and discuss the issues at stake, helped people to accept otherwise unpalatable sacrifice.

To summarise: a clear case of a good political compromise is an agreement that involves:

1. The (often painful) recognition of the other side as partner, not enemy;
2. Giving up dreams/aspirations/ideal solutions in favour of an achievable second-best solution;
3. Making mutual concessions that express recognition of the other's sacrifices (See Margalit, 2010, p 54).

Each of these aspects, as I have indicated, makes educational demands. They require understanding (a) the need for nurturing respect; (b) value conflicts and the possibility of second-best solutions; and (c) the need to acknowledge mutual sacrifice.

Compromise within democratic government

This account of a good political compromise represents an extreme – a compromise between former enemies. It is different then, as we noted, from the Luke and Daisy case because they are negotiating within a shared value framework. Their situation is somewhat akin to compromises between political parties, in that a good compromise between parties to form a government takes place within the framework of the democratic process.

This involves modifying the three features of the good compromise between former enemies:

1. the parties are not appropriately described as enemies. Within the context of democratic choice they are offering different programmes to the electorate;
2. the parties are not required to totally give up their aspirations and proposed policies, because they can hope to fight other elections on their distinctive programmes;
3. in forming a government there will need to be recognition of the burdens each party has to bear, both by the parties and the electorate.

The implications for public education as well as political education in schools and colleges are many, not least in a country like the UK where coalition government has until recently not been the norm. They include informing and encouraging discussion about compromise and coalition government in general as well as about specific compromises. Looking to historical precedents does not offer much guidance. This is because there are few general rules to be imparted, aside from the repeated request, familiar in this paper, that all parties treat each other with respect. This is a rule agreed, it seems, on the second day of the convention in 1787 to establish the Federal Constitution (Gutmann and Thompson, 2010, p60). To judge from American evidence, most of the US electorate today do not need to be persuaded of the value of compromise in general. They like the idea but then fail to support particular compromises. They also like politicians who stick to their principles (Gutmann and Thompson, 2010, p25, p27).

Public political education needs to address this ambivalent attitude to compromise, surely not confined to the USA. Addressing specific compromises, it needs, on the one hand, to take proposed policy compromises on a case-by-case basis, since there is no slide rule that picks out good ones from bad. Public discussion can subject each proposed compromise on policy to a forensic examination. Is it an advance on the status quo? Or is there good reason not to compromise, but to delay a decision? Or will delay merely play into the hands of powerful interests opposed to change at any price? Public approval of politicians with principles need not work against compromise. Having leaders with firm principles can be a good thing in a compromise situation. People know exactly where each party leader stands, so that his or her moves towards a compromise position can be judged and encouraged, or in some cases discouraged. This was indeed Keynes's educational intention. He aimed to show the unfeasibility of the compromises resulting in the punitive Versailles Treaty which would callously impoverish all Europe, ending his book 'the true voice of the new generation has not spoken and silent opinion is not yet formed' and it is to 'the formation of the general opinion of the future I dedicate this book.' (Keynes, 1920, p279). The job of public education, then, is to convey to supporters and voters the complexities of specific compromises, including the background behind certain moves, so as to put them in a position to assess them.

The public discussion and also that in schools and colleges can look, too, at relevant structural issues in democratic politics. How far is any particular political system responsive to, or inhibiting of, compromise? How far, for instance, is a first-past-the-post party system antithetical to compromise in government? Parties lay out their policy

stalls before an election but then in the event of a coalition they have to compromise on some of their manifesto promises. Their supporters as well as other voters may then feel let down as their favoured policies fail to make it on to the government's agenda. Coming to understand the demands of campaigning as against those of governing may help to assuage the resulting feelings of dissatisfaction (Gutmann and Thompson, 2012). But it can also prompt consideration of other practices. Proportional voting systems, for instance, may be more responsive to minority interests and compromise building. Looking at the structures that might promote or inhibit a politics of compromise puts familiar democratic practices under scrutiny, bringing abstract discussions of electoral reform alive.

The last two sections have both focussed on good political compromises and the demands they make on political education. We need now to consider another *bad* compromise. Beyond the shabby and the shoddy variety, there is the rotten compromise.

What is a rotten compromise?

The rotten compromise demands separate treatment because it has a particularly sinister feature. It is, as Margalit succinctly describes it, an 'agreement that establishes or maintains an inhuman political order based on systematic cruelty and humiliation, as its permanent features; usually the party that suffers the cruelty and the humiliation is not a party to the agreement.' By 'humiliation', Margalit explains, he means dehumanization, treating humans as nonhumans; and by 'cruelty,' a pattern of behaviour that wilfully causes pain and distress. A rotten compromise is an assault on morality itself, because it undermines the notion of a shared humanity (Margalit, 2010, p54).

One of Margalit's examples is the compromise over slavery involved in forming the Union and establishing the American Constitution. Slavery already existed in America before Independence, so the Union did not establish it. But a series of compromises from 1787 onwards, including the Missouri Compromise of 1820, allowed slavery to continue in the southern states. Whilst not as bad as establishing it, if the compromises helped to *maintain* slavery they were rotten.

There is a complex and contested history here, acknowledged by historians, political theorists and philosophers (Bordewich, 2012; McPherson 1990; Gutmann and Thompson 2012, pages 54-61; Callan, 2009). Much of this is concerned to judge how blameworthy the parties to the compromises were. But examining what a rotten compromise is does not require a forensic sifting of the historical evidence. The crucial point is that no one asked the black slaves whether they consented to the Constitution. Others made the compromises about which states were to be slave states and which not. The slaves were the third party suffering cruelty and humiliation. This is underscored in the calculation that does not count slaves as persons.¹ In the light of this history, it is worth noting that US President Wilson said before Congress on February 11th 1918, when setting out the terms for the peace to end the 1914-18 war: 'Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival States' (Keynes, 1920 p 57). A clear statement of the need to shun any settlement over the heads of third parties.

The rotten compromise makes its own unique educational demands on public and school education. Voters need to be informed and able to assess what is done on their behalf and how far it involves intolerable treatment of third parties who are merely unconsenting victims. A relevant historical case here is the compromise between the

Allies in the Yalta agreement in 1945 that included operation Keelhaul. This involved forced repatriation of Soviet citizens and soldiers, with the tacit understanding that this would mean life, and possibly death, in Stalin's labour camps. The forced repatriation was not revealed at the time and only publically admitted much later (for a relevant discussion of Operation Keelhaul see Margalit, 2010, pages 99-108). The public at the time therefore could not judge it. Did this rotten compromise need to be kept secret for defensible security reasons? Perhaps. But that does not preclude in such cases later commissions of enquiry, in which the reasons for secrecy can also come under scrutiny. Then voters can judge for themselves and demand that politicians acting on their behalf are called to account if necessary. Citizens need to know about the moral issues raised by the actions of their representatives and the representatives need to be aware that they will be called to account.

In schools and colleges political educators miss an opportunity if they allow students to take the moral high ground and dismiss any rotten compromise in politics as inadmissible, because ruled out by the Kantian principle against using people merely as means. It is too easy to assume that no rotten compromise is ever morally justified. Raising this issue invokes the topic of 'dirty hands', a phrase that has come to cover a range of issues in politics, including the rotten compromise (see Coady, 2010, chapter 4). What I have in mind by 'dirty hands' are those situations in which decent politicians judge that they are compelled to engage in, or at least be complicit in, some evil because any alternative course of action would either involve the loss of a great good or fail to prevent a much greater evil. Historically, they include compromises like those which allowed slavery to continue in the US and operation Keelhaul in the Yalta agreement. Considering compromises like these gives students a chance to reflect on the defensibility, or perhaps at least excusability, of these rotten compromises. Were the available alternatives so much worse, and how likely were they? More broadly, can there be a democratic politics in which there is less pressure to lie (Coady, 2010, chapter 5; White, 1983, pages 63-70)? Paradoxically, studying rotten compromises may suggest to students that democratic politics, despite its poor image and often real failings, can be an intensely moral endeavour.

Compromise and political education

The topic of compromise brings out the importance of understanding the place of respect – taken-for-granted respect, as I have called it here – in all institutions in a democratic society, not least educational ones. It also underlines the special need to foster respect where relations within societies, and between them, are fractured and extra efforts have to be made. It is hard to overstate the importance in democratic life of respect for others as equals. The paper's discussion of compromise, in which references to respect in the real world of politics have been a strong thread, has underlined this.

It has also, secondly, suggested including political compromise as a topic in its own right in formal school and college courses. Students need to understand that a good compromise is not simply a bargain or negotiation, but a particular way of dealing with a political conflict. It is to be distinguished from shoddy, shabby and rotten compromises. An understanding of compromise can develop in political education or civic education classes, but that can be immensely enriched by work in history, literature, biography and drama. There is a wealth of material here for teachers to draw on to develop an in-depth understanding of different kinds of compromises.

Third, there are also many ways in which public political education can help people to understand and evaluate particular compromises involving present or former enemies – as in, for instance, Northern Ireland, the Crimea and Russia, Israel and Palestine. This

might include accounts of the history of the conflict, as well as of what is crucially important to each of the parties. Here independent commentators in media of all kinds can play a vital, critical role in helping people acquire knowledge, sift fact from fiction, and see what might be realistic and achievable and what is wishful thinking. This can encourage citizens to evaluate second-best solutions, and guard against being unwittingly complicit in rotten compromises. Citizens living in a compromise situation need this kind of understanding. But so, from a different perspective, do others far from the conflict in our increasingly interconnected world, if they are to assess their own government's and international agencies' actions or inaction.

As we have seen, even compromise between political parties within a settled democratic framework is not always a benign affair. It has its own complexities that public and school education can illuminate, as well as prompting discussion about democratic structures that might support rather than inhibit compromise.

Political compromise is not a subject that can be covered in a few lessons, a couple of TV documentaries or articles in a broadsheet supplement. Such treatment could just reinforce the impression, often given by populist parties and media, that the big political issues are basically very simple and need no-nonsense solutions. Compromise is not simple. The topic extends from issues about political corruption and radical evil to high moral endeavour in politics. At the same time it raises fundamental questions about the viability of democratic structures and practices often take for granted. Understanding political compromise demands a dual agenda: political education in schools and colleges and public engagement, sustained by independent media, with citizens.

Notes

1. The Great Compromise of 1787 determined that in the Lower House, each State should have one representative for every 40,000 inhabitants, counting a slave, for these purposes, as three-fifths of an inhabitant (See Article 1, Section 2, Paragraph 3 of the United States Constitution for the reference to 'three fifths of all other Persons'). So third parties count here as fractions of persons.

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Within such political compromise, mutual respect plays an important part of the democratic process, and while many MPs have poor voting records as to LGBT rights, there is a necessity to treat citizens as autonomous agents who have a role in the creation of legislation, rather than just being the objects of it (Gutmann and Thompson, 2010).^Â Lastly, a well-known consequence of affective political polarization is a rigid unwillingness to compromise with members of the outparty (Gutmann and Thompson 2010;Harbridge, Malhotra, and Harrison 2014). Might an elite's base relations also affect partisans' willingness to support bipartisan policy compromise? By 'liberal education' we mean 'education for its own sake, learning because as human beings we want to learn and understand - not education as training for a job. So universities want more concentration on (6) and less on the narrow learning of (1) and (3). They want 'educated' students who have wide knowledge of the wisdom of earlier civilizations. They want students who can deal with ideas and concepts. Some of them are always searching for students who have been educated according to (8), as are some school teachers. ^âPolitics presupposes the diversity of view, if not about ultimate aims, at least about the best ways of achieving them^â™ (Miller, 1987). The world has its limits; all material wealth within it is exhaustible. Who, therefore, gets how large a share, of those resources, which are present on the earth in limited supply? If man were permitted to act on and pursue his own selfish interests, snatching that, which he desires, a society would quickly become under rule of violence. Politics is a way of combating the degradation of society into a violent and unstructured mess by reducing it to be govern